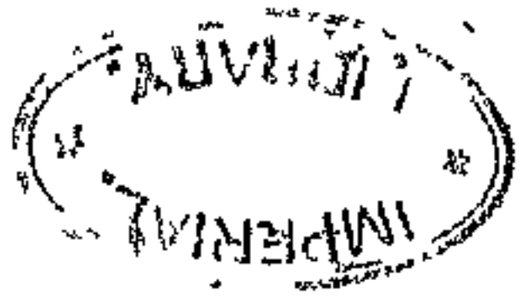
IMPERIAL

FROM GOLDEN GATE TO GOLDEN SUN

IN GALA ATTIRE THE PARAMOUNT KING OF NIAS ISLAND SUMA

FROM GOLDEN GATE TO GOLDEN SUN

A RECORD OF TRAVEL, SPORT AND OBSERVATION IN SIAM AND MALAYA

BY

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TO
THE MEMORY
OF MY BEST PAL
A. N.

MANUFACTURED IN GREAT BRITAIN

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FROM GOLDEN GATE TO GOLDEN SUN

CHAPTER I

THE HAPHAZARD JOURNEY

Good luck—working inscrutably as both good and bad luck do—took me into Malaya, with all that means of unusual experience, and of contact with peoples shut away from the main streams of progress, as well as those reacting to an inrush of new world conditions.

But when I admit that I set out for Tahiti, and arrived instead at Borneo, Siam, Sumatra and Nias, you will think that I have turned back the calendar at least four hundred years. The story has a flavour of Columbus, and of those sixteenth century explorers who cruised the Pacific in quest of some definite bit of land, and, missing the carelessly charted island by a thousand or so miles, came instead on something much more interesting. But though in the twentieth century we arrive often enough at sixteenth century results, our methods are sure to have been different.

Everybody remembers the South Sea Islands

fever that spread through several years and became an epidemic in the winter of 1920-21. I caught it. I, too, wished to know the enchantment of coral reefs, and of Polynesian beauty, wished to take my chance of being eaten by a Melanesian grotesque. Straightway I shoved into the undated future the plans I was making for a trip into Africa to hunt big game, and by telegram from New York to San Francisco reserved steamship accommodations. So comprehensive had been my reading that I could have passed an examination on the literature of the South Seas, from Captain Cook down to the book of the hour. In my luggage, I made provision for diverse conditions. The men from the club in New York who saw me off said that my passage through the Pennsylvania station was like a caravan, with red caps taking the place of camels. There were many leather bags and square tin boxes; a tropical helmet that refused to be packed, a canvas sleeping cot, a typewriter, and a Victrola. I was prepared to rough it in as much comfort as possible in whatever wild places I might choose to linger. The Victrola had nothing to do with my potential comfort, nor did I aspire to the rôle of strolling musician with an up-to-the-minute instrument. I merely hoped to find some remote island where the thing had not yet penetrated, and try it out on the natives. Thus my planning.

I missed my boat. The farewell dinner at the Bohemian club had been too gay and long. My sleep next morning had been too heavy. As I

stood on the pier in San Francisco and watched my ship pass through the Golden Gate I was glad that I had had the forethought. I called it fore-thought—not to send my luggage aboard the day before. I was instantly aware that it was not the South Seas that I wanted after all. I would go somewhere else Perhaps I should visit Sumatra again, and perhaps travel some other ground that was old to me, but certainly I would visit some places that I could see with fresh eyes, not eyes dulled with the impressions of a score of other men. The journey should be one for first hand knowledge and experience. Romance and adventure, too, if they should fall to my luck, but I knew them to be shy birds and rare; not to be found by seeking. I meant to follow any trail of interest that might open. This elasticity of plan was the more appealing to me because it had never been possible on any of my former journeys, most of which had been made in the interest of that ruthless clock-watcher and route-layer, business.

And so my journey was made; haphazard as I had planned; free as I had planned. The sleeping cot went early into the discard. The Victrola travelled far. Whenever it was possible, and I could establish communication, I hobnobbed with natives. Sometimes I sought and made the acquaintance of persons in power, or used introductions to them. Only once did I come close to allowing myself to be diverted from my care free jaunting.

I was at the time en route for Siam, by way of the Malay peninsula. At the Eastern and Oriental Hotel at Penang I fell into conversation with another American; his talk with its constant references to elephants and tigers, orang-outangs and snakes held me spell-bound. A stout little man, he was, and middle aged; familiarity with jungle beasts seemed oddly out of keeping with his type. We dined together, for I had no intention of letting so entertaining a companion escape. A direct question brought the information I wanted. He supplied animals to the American zoo and moving picture markets; had just brought in from Rangoon a cargo bought from the trappers in the interior.

An interesting business, I could readily see. Had he followed it long?

"Just a couple of years," he said. "But I've had my eye on it a long time. Made up my mind a good while ago that if anything happened to my business, I'd go in for this."

Something had happened, then?

"Volstead. I had a brewery in California. But I like this better. There's more excitement; and the profits are big."

He convinced me about the profits. For example, there was in the present cargo a gigantic orang-outang; I believe nine feet was the height mentioned. The ex brewer had bought him for something like five hundred dollars. He was to be taken to Long Beach in California, and there exhibited at twenty five cents a look to the thousands

of tourists who would undoubtedly wish to see him. Afterwards he would be taken east and sold to some zoo, for at least two thousand dollars.

Seeing my interest, my new-found friend gave me an opportunity to come in on the business. My part, aside from the investment of some capital, would be to stay at Penang or Singapore, at whichever point the animals were assembled, and see that they were fed and otherwise well cared for by their keepers, while my partner returned to Rangoon to buy more.

To stay and feed the animals! To come to know them while they were still fresh from the jungle; and not deadened by years behind bars. This nine foot orang-outang alone. For a moment the project held all the fascination that went with the circus when I was a small boy. Besides, there were the profits; profits far less problematical than those of the tin mine I had just permitted myself to become interested in at Ipoh. But the tin mine had one advantage. It would keep on doing its best or its worst regardless of my presence. The caged jungle beasts would hold me fast.

"No," I said, firmly. "Yours is the most alluring proposition I have had for a long time. But I shall keep out. I retired ten years ago from a mighty good business so that I should be free to come and go as I pleased."

And so I continued my haphazard journey. In looking back over the colourful year, certain pictures stand vividly out, less for their connection with the

running course of the journey's events, than for their significance of the spirit of the place of happening, or of a changing order.

There are, for example, the gentleman beach combers of Singapore. Handsome young Englishmen, still dressed in the whites of the tropics, though whites no longer immaculate, who come into the clubs and hotels to borrow small sums from any who will lend. A white man without resource in a yellow man's country is always a tragic sight, and Singapore is now full of these tragic sights Beach combers there have always been, of course, but this type did not exist on my former visits. It is a product of post-war conditions. These men are out of employment through the closing down of the rubber plantations. From all directions they have drifted to Singapore, and are lingering there in the hope that work will open up again. And they are for the most part fine fellows; too proud to send home an S.O.S.

The ports of British North Borneo are thrice told tales Two little experiences of mine are significant. I had been commissioned by a lad at home to buy two complete sets of stamps at every port I visited At the Sandakan post office, I discovered that some of these stamps, put out by the North Borneo Trading Company to gratify the stamp collector's zeal, cost as much as ten dollars. Eighty dollars barely covered the cost of the lot These stamps, which are changed every few years, afford only one example of the trading company's acumen in fostering business at the expense of enthusiasts,

foibles, and vices. Opium is another. Gambling is still another.

I had my hours at the gambling farms—run by Chinamen on concession of the trading company losing money gaily at wheel and cards and dominoes. Then I saved my face and something more by myself introducing a game. I took dice from my pocket, breathed on them, conjured them with the darkies' formula and the game of craps was inaugurated in Sandakan.

One by one, several Chinamen left their game to join mine. When each in his turn took the dice, he followed my example as nearly as possible Not one neglected to breathe on them. Not one forgot to talk to them, though I shall never know how near they, in their vernacular, came to the "seven come eleven" to which the dice are in the habit of responding. Whatever they said, it worked. I soon withdrew from the game. Experience has its brief hour of advantage; it should not enter into prolonged competition with genius

Siam, when at last I came to it, broke on me as a land of gaiety and charm, but even more as a land of contrasts where the eternally Asiatic and old exists side by side with the vividly European and new. And of all the wide swing of persons and experiences that made interesting my stay in Bangkok, I would last part, in memory, with my hour of talk with Prince Damrong while we walked together under the palms and tamarinds in the garden of the Hôtel Royal

Half brother and prime minister of the late king, the old prince, now well in his seventies, talked to me of the years of Chulalongkorn's reign.

"These beautiful bridges over the klongs; they were my Master's gifts to his people, one on each of his many birthdays The elephant paths along the river were made into splendid streets The schools—he made the start of them as they are to-day.

"We made a beginning; my Master and the men he gathered about him. Now the others will go on."

As he talked, the wise and vigorous old man became to me the embodiment of the spirit of astounding progress which marked the fifty years lying between the semi barbarism of old Siam, and the modern, outreaching spirit of the present court.

From Siam to Sumatra is a far swing in spirit—as far a swing as from the white elephants in the royal stables of the one place, to the wild elephants I hunted in the other. Astonishing changes had come in the eight years since my former visit to the great Dutch island; changes that, wild as Sumatra is in many places, can best be exemplified in one detail of my two visits to the Batak country.

Eight years ago I was rowed across one corner of Lake Toba in a war dugout, manned by fourteen naked Bataks, singing wild songs as they pulled at the oars It was the only boat in sight Last year I travelled the length of the lake in a motor boat run by the Dutch Government. I had forty

fellow-passengers And this launch was only one of the many that were skimming the lake.

In Sumatra's small neighbour Nias—the climax of the journey—I found savagery and superstition as they have existed through the generations. There, in the presence of Dutch officers, who stand for the new order, I saw the warriors of old King Wakil. I saw his trophies of old wars. I saw his barbaric robes, and heavy gold crowns. And I saw a row of heads that looked to me suspiciously fresh Still, that may have been my imagination The Dutch official said it was.

CHAPTER II

IN SARAWAK JUNGLES

JESSELTON in North Borneo had been my last stop, my passage on the s.s. *Selangor* was booked to Singapore. Off Labuan, where we had cast anchor for a few hours' stay, my attention was caught by a curious sailing craft that lay alongside of us. It flew the Sarawak flag, a scarlet and black cross on a yellow ground, and carried the most oddly assorted crew I had ever seen The clothes ranged from loin cloth to military uniform. When a European in white duck came from the thatched middle of the boat, Staite, the young Englishman with whom I had struck up a friendship on shipboard, began to wave his arms.

"It's Andreini," he told me. "Luck was with my cable."

Captain Andreini is an officer-in-charge under Sir James Brooke, the Rajah of Sarawak. Staite and he had been boys together in England. Though Staite had cabled several days before in the hope of arranging this meeting with his old friend, he had not really counted on the captain receiving it in time to meet us. For even a cable to Fort Lawas, the captain's headquarters, depends on wind and

weather. Sarawak has no wire nor steamer connections except with its capital, Kuching, at the Southern end.

The captain waved and called a greeting in answer to Staite's, climbed our rope ladder with a cat's swiftness, and in another minute he and Staite were shaking hands and talking. I left them together over a gin sling, and was preparing to go ashore when Staite called me.

Captain Andreini had invited the two of us to cross to the mainland in his boat, the *Gajah Mina*, and go with him on a river trip through a part of the territory he supervises, which is in the northwest of Sarawak.

Singapore could wait. Had I had pressing business there, I think it would have waited anyway, for such an opportunity was not to be overlooked. Sarawak is inaccessible at best. Foreign intrusion is not welcomed, for the present rajah continues the policy of his predecessors, his father and his grand uncle. It was the latter who gave his help to one sultan; fought opposing sultans, and, as an individual, obtained possession of Sarawak for himself and his heirs. He became rajah in 1841. In 1888, after his death, the British Government granted protection to the territory that he had won; many additions have been made to it since that time, until now this great independent state covers an area as large as the State of New York, and has a population of five million. Let me say in passing that the policy of conservatism and seclusion is not

in discrimination against outside capital, with honest intention. Rather it is against exploiting adventurers who care nothing for the development and the well-being of the country. The rajah is aided in his government by native officers, and British officers in-charge. It was a rare opportunity to be the guest of one of these; to travel with him through a part of the river-webbed jungle; to see and, in a manner to share, something of the life of the natives.

The wind was favourable for an early start. We hurried our belongings off the *Selangor*, and sorted out those we should need in Sarawak. In the sorting I hesitated over my Victrola, but the captain settled that.

"Take it, whatever else you leave My people never saw one"

The discarded luggage was left in care of James, a spectacled, fat Madrasee, who for twenty years has been agent for the Sarawak Government in Labuan, and is in charge of the coaling of steamers Thrifty as a Yankee, when he was setting the last of my bags away, he mentioned that he carried stamps as a side line. *Stamps* The word brought me up short in my preparations for going. It reminded me that I had gone bankrupt for ready cash, in filling a New York youngster's stamp-buying commissions I took State aside, but there was no chance there. He was in the same fix. The captain laughed when I told him what the matter was.

"What would you do with cash if you had it?" he asked. "If you were going to Kuching you might have a little use for it. You could send a wireless to Singapore, or buy something, or even endow a mission. But up here in my territory—wait till you see it You're going into the jungle, man! Take along some cloth and tobacco if you want to make friends with the natives, or to trade for their swords, parangs and shields You won't need anything else."

A Chinese trader gave me credit for several sacks of tobacco, and for bolts of red, blue and yellow calico. Then we boarded the *Gajah Mina*. The crew spread the single sail, and we drifted into the bay.

Our queer craft was thirty-eight feet over all and ten across. Staite and I were at a loss to know why it had been given a name that meant Elephant Boat, until later when we travelled in the river Prahus. Elephant it was, in comparison. We made ourselves comfortable on the mats; smoked and swapped yarns, travellers' yarns.

The ten men who made up the crew kept busy fore and aft. They shifted the sail to catch every stir of wind; when it died down they used paddles. A nearer view emphasised the wide swing of costume among these men. There were dingy grey loin-cloths and bright-coloured sarongs Two wore black uniforms, with scarlet on the collars, cuffs and caps, showing them to be fortmen. One of these, a Sea Dyak, had also a scarlet stripe on his

trousers, he was a corporal from Fort Tupsan Some were turbaned; some had long hair, and others were cropped. Most important to our immediate comfort was Cookie, a Chinaman. He clattered about with pots and pans, and soon set out on one of our suit-cases an excellent tiffin. Fish caught while we sailed was the chief item. So soon as we had eaten I tried out my Victrola on the crew. The effect was all that I could have wished The men had shown curiosity about the instrument when I set it up, and with the first sound they dropped whatever they were doing, and became statues. They forgot to paddle; forgot to shift the sail. The Sea Dyak corporal could not be induced to go back to work so long as the music sounded He kept his ear close to the instrument. Close; but we noticed that he took care not to touch it.

In the late afternoon we crossed the Straits of Labuan, and entered the mouth of a river, the first of the many streams we were to sail. Other than the Trusan and the Lawas, I shall not mention any of them by name, for the excellent reason that most have no names, and are not mapped. A part of the territory we were entering is a comparatively new accession to Sarawak; having been ceded in 1896 by the Sultan of Brueni.

And it was there at the mouth of the river that we came to our first kampong. It is a village on stilts, built well out into the water; this in compliance with the religion of the tribe which forbids them to live on shore. The score of shacks that

make up the village have the floors about ten or twelve feet above the level of the river. We climbed the ladder that led to the stilt-braced platform, which served as village street. Around us swarmed children; some naked, some with loincloths, a few in trousers and skirts, but all curious. They refused the walnuts I offered them, but I saw some looking greedily at little cakes displayed in the trading booth, and I negotiated a purchase with a few North Borneo coins I found in my pocket. Here, so close to shore, these coins were still good. This little trading bazaar, the first I found in Sarawak, was typical of one in each village. When I had satisfied the children about me with cakes, I amused myself by throwing some to the children who were swimming about our boat. The youngsters on the platform dived into the water for another share. Some succeeded in catching the cakes with their teeth, and came out of the water dripping and proud as retrievers

But we might not stay to play with children while a chief awaited us. Fat, grey-bearded, dressed in the skirt, jacket and turban of the Mohammedan, the Datu welcomed us in the verandah of his compound. A rickety-looking shack it was. It began with a verandah and had room behind room, making in all a long, narrow structure. Probably the women of the chief's household were in some of these rear rooms We caught no glimpse of them, of course, since they were Mohammedan. Somebody opened a bottle of Scotch to celebrate our arrival in Sarawak,

and the chief drank with us, forgetting his religion for the moment.

We sat on mats while we talked. That is, while Captain Andreini and the chief talked; they had matters of business to discuss in the chief's language Enjoyment of the picturesque scene was occupation enough for me: The grizzled native chief making his report to the young captain, trig and spotless in his white duck, in the foreground, and in the background a group of half naked figures just at the edge of the circle of light thrown by the kerosene lamp with sooty chimney. Such a lamp as I have seen in many a farmhouse in America, which made the group it lighted the stranger to my eyes.

In an hour we were back on the river, but had transhipped from the *Gajah Mina* to a slender, long prahu. The Elephant Boat could not climb the rivers in the time that we must make Every man of our crew, even the cook and the corporal, took a paddle, and we shot like an arrow up the moonlit water. The dexterity and swiftness with which the three-foot paddles are used are sources of grea pride to the natives. A record of seventy strokes a minute was counted and set down a few years ago by the Chief of Police in Brueni. Some time between midnight and dawn we pulled up at a house near the river's bank. "Fort Sundaer," the captain announced. "We'll finish the night in bed."

We did. And mine was a bed with sheets. That surprised me, for in the darkness the fort had seemed

hardly different from a native's shack, and I had not expected the luxuries of linen. The captain's voice, rolling the liquid Malayan, awakened me at sunrise. I hurried to the bath, always to be found where the English are It consisted of a barrel of water, and a dipper to splash with, and stood under the fort—a bathroom quite private enough for Malayan standards, which standards were also mine for the time being. Refreshed, I dressed and went down to the river, treading the long, wet grass with my bare feet. The sun had shot high enough to light the luxurious foliage on both sides of the narrow stream. Orchids hung from the tree branches. Parakeets fluttered about, moving spots of vivid green. It was a tropic morning at its most enchanting. And from this I was called to a breakfast of sardines.

The comfortable house was shown to be a fort by a couple of cannons and the slanting grill work close under the roof. Through it the five or six native soldiers there stationed might shoot if necessary. Each of the forts was similar in these details, the number of soldiers varying with the size and importance of the fort. But not here, nor at any of the other forts we visited, had the captain's routine of business anything to do with possible warfare. There was, however, much business to be done. After breakfast we went into the main room, and found a crowd waiting.

Klabits, Muruts and Land Dyaks were all represented, though there has been so much inter-

marriage that the tribes are no longer easily distinguishable Most were in loin-cloths or sarongs; a few wore trousers—cotton shorts. Some had their ears punctured, and the lobes were pulled almost to their shoulders with the weight of small articles hanging from them, for the ears share with the belt the part played by pockets in the garb of civilised men. Days later one of our crew let me examine the contents of the pouch that hung from his belt. It held his tobacco, and the betel-nut, which is just as necessary to the native's happiness. There were, besides, some rusty nails such as a small boy might treasure, and a crude, cruel device that was evidence of the sadistic qualities of these men.

Part of the crowd that awaited us had been attracted by the chance of seeing more than one white man a rare event, and the rumour of our coming had spread But most had come for the serious business of attending court, and of asking advice. Captain Andreini sat at a desk in a railed-off corner of the room. He was attended by the Datu, the native chief of the district, and by his uniformed fortmen, one of whom knew enough English to make a record and act as clerk. The fortmen, like the native chiefs and their sons, each wore a parang: a long knife in a sheath.

I wanted a parang. The one that gripped my fancy hardest was beautifully carved and decorated. It looked as though its owner had been uncommonly efficient in ridding himself of enemies.

When the chance came I offered the fortman who wore it any amount of cloth and tobacco in exchange. When I saw that he was not tempted, I brought out a ten-dollar gold piece. Gold there is almost as rare and as coveted as a Koh-i nor with us, but even at that he shook his head. And there came an instant realisation of how wrong I was in the matter Of course, men do not sell their Victoria Crosses, the Croix de Guerre, nor their parangs. No amount of buying and carrying away could have made that parang mine. It was not a record of my bravery. It was not my enemy's hair that hung from the sheath

Not understanding Malayan, I was in even worse case in that court room than I am in one in America, where the judge and witnesses always mumble, and only the lawyers and jury know what is happening. And I very much wanted to know what grievance the tall Klabit in greyish loin-cloth had brought to court. He fingered the tobacco pouch that hung from his belt as though he wished it were a parang. A Sea Dyak who stood by was evidently the accused. I asked the captain about it afterwards. "Had the Dyak stolen his knife, or one of his wives?"

"Neither," the captain said. "But it was a property right case. The Dyak had been pilfering bananas from one of the Klabit's trees. Whoever plants a tree, its fruit belongs to him and his family for ever." In the court room the natives spoke only when addressed. They were alert-eyed, but

silent; rather sullen. But from the outside came a steady flow of many voices. Evidently a *fiut* tree case in Sundaer attracts as much public comment as a question of mining rights in Colorado, or the exact position of a fence dividing valuable estates anywhere in the civilised world. "There will probably be more of this kind of thing, and some other cases at Tiusan," Captain Andreini told me.

We set off for Fort Tiusan, on the Tiusan River, almost immediately At the place where we had made landing the night before we found the *Grajah Mina* awaiting us. A crew furnished by the chief we had last visited had paddled the big boat slowly up the stream. In spite of all that we had accomplished it was no later than eight when we started.

It was an all day trip, but it held nothing of the monotony of the usual river journey. We were close enough to shore to feel the mystery of the jungle. We saw isolated huts; flimsy, rickety shacks with a score of natives standing in the verandahs, watching us out of sight The three white men in the boat were no doubt as romantic to them as they were to us; the more strange and romantic probably because the sound of our Victrola must have reached them.

Nor was it only the romance of human life that we felt. Wild buffaloes bathed in the water through which we paddled; bright-coloured birds perched on their backs. The swish of water close to shore told where the invisible crocodiles lurked,

hoping, probably, that one of the white men would be fool enough to take refuge from the burning heat by a dip in the water, which would have been the crocodile's cue for swift action We passed fields of waving paddy, and sometimes under green arcades of overhanging boughs. We heard the chattering of monkeys We did not talk much, all, even the captain who was accustomed to these scenes, were under a spell of enchantment.

In the late afternoon we made landing about three miles from our destination. We left the crew making fast the *Gajah Mina* —they tied her with a vine rope to a paddle stuck upright in the mud—and we struck straight into the forest of palm trees. We had tramped probably two miles on a path beaten by native feet when we saw two dots approaching. A nearer view revealed them to be native chiefs dressed, Arab fashion, in skirt and jacket. One wore a velvet turban with gold band, a sign of rank. The greeting to which we had become accustomed, "Tabek, Tuan," was followed by much agitated talk It was evident from their manner and from the captain's that they were presenting some complication other than I had yet seen the captain untangle He turned to Stáite and me

"The Datu's mother is sick. I am to visit her and see what I can do. Being a doctor is part of my job"

Later I saw him working often and hard on that job I saw him administer medicine hypodermically to natives rotting with the disease that Euro-

peans have given to the brown peoples At an isolated kampong on the Trusan, one man was brought who was so far gone he could not lift himself from all fours. The captain wished to take him away with us, in order to put him in a hospital in Labuan. The man refused to go.

"But you'll die if you don't. I can't help you," the captain said.

"Then I'll die," the man answered, and, on hands and knees, turned away. "Here." They dread the unknown; dread being taken from the place to which they are accustomed. Death was nothing in comparison to that.

But this was a different case. Together with the chiefs we entered a house which, though it did not look large from the front, stretched far back into the jungle. It was like a long barn; and had need to be long, for it was the home of the elder chief, and harboured a dozen families of his kin. The roof and outside walls were thatched with the Nipa palm, doubled over a stick, and fastened down with reeds. We had entered by climbing a fragile ladder up to a large porch, and were led through many rooms to one near the end of the house. There on a mat lay the chief's sick old mother.

She looked incredibly old. The head seemed only a skull with brownish, purple-patched skin stretched over it. The black eyes, deep back in the sockets, were brilliant with fever. She must have been at least twenty-five years beyond the century mark, for her son, himself old, said, "She

was no longer young enough to stamp paddy when the first Rajah came." And that had been in 1841. Andreini put some lotion on the sore flesh, worn through by bones, and gave some medicine to cool the fever. "It won't be long," he said.

How it happened that we had been permitted to enter with the captain I do not know. Probably a finer delicacy would have caused me to wait in one of the other rooms, but I am sure that it had been interest and a desire to help the captain that had made me follow him And intruder though I felt myself to be, I should regret not having been present. The picture will stay with me always. The old, old woman, the mother of a line of chiefs, awaiting her end. It held the dignity, the stark majesty that the approach of death should hold, but which I have never seen in the flurry and circumstance of civilisation.

Since there was nothing more the captain could do, we left her with her kin, and made our way back through the bare rooms. Mats were the sole furnishings These were made of the pleated bark of reeds and slip cane, were of beautiful design, and were, no doubt, the work of the women and girls we had seen peering at us from the room back of that in which the sick woman lay Clay cups and plates hung round the fireplace; wood was stacked beside it.

"Strings of heads used to hang there too," the captain said. "Trophies of bravery to be handed on from one generation to another. When Sir

James Brooke remonstrated with a native for head-hunting, the story goes that he received the reply: 'You love your books, we love our heads' Perhaps it is a bit rough on them, interfering with their customs. There's no more head hunting in Sarawak."

I wondered whether he were so cocksure as he sounded, and asked him. He laughed. "Oh, an isolated case, perhaps, now and then when the native is reasonably sure of escaping detection. The punishment used to be a fine. Now it is death."

A mile farther along the jungle path was the village of Trusan A gong sounded as we entered, by way of announcement that an Officer-in-Charge has arrived, which custom was established by the rajah's orders. But there was no turning out of villagers in welcome; perhaps we were watched from within doors. It took only a moment to pass through the little trading street, the usual wooden stalls, and climb the steep hill on which the fort stands Except Sundaer, every fort we visited was built on a hill. Trusan, considerably larger than Sundaer, seemed an imposing structure to Staite and me who had, by this time, new standards of size and substantialness. We lingered on the verandah to regain our breath and watch the sunset. The jungle swallowed the fiery ball at one gulp.

"You'll hold a reception to night," the captain said at dinner. We had barely finished when the guests began to arrive. First came the two chiefs

who had taken us to the dying old woman They were followed by men and boys children as young as seven or eight; arriving in groups of two or three or half a dozen. There seemed to be no end. Each shook hands, first with the captain, then with Staite and me, murmured to each of us, "Tabek, Tuan," and moved on. When the procession was over, probably sixty were gathered in the room, the chief one of the fort, and used always for court and all assemblies. Our guests were waiting in manifest expectancy. It was the moment for my phonograph

I have mentioned the Victrola several times. On the boat, and in each of the villages it had served a turn of entertainment, but that night I went through my entire repertoire of records It was a motley lot, a bit of every kind of music, for even in more sophisticated groups one can't know in advance just what tastes one will have to please, and I had rightly surmised that here the difficulty would be greater. So that night I put record after record in place, turned the crank, set the needle, and watched the effect. "Oh, my Gee-Gee of the Fiji Isles," brought no response I concluded that Italian music must have humorous qualities I had never suspected, for they laughed straight through Mimi's great aria from Boheme, the Pagliacci prologue, and "Oh Sole Mio." Fox-trots, to which young and middle-aged America were dancing, pleased them also, their bodies swayed rhythmically; they talked together But the record which won the greatest demonstration was one in which a

rooster crows. It was not until I had closed the phonograph that any showed a willingness to go. None dared go near the box. Even in passing from the room each circled around, giving it a wide berth. Interesting it was, and worth going far to hear, but obviously they would take no chances with the unfamiliar demon.

Many of the same faces appeared next morning at court. The scene was similar to that of Sundaer. Only here two chiefs shared the responsibility of judgment with the young Officer-in-Charge. They sat close to the captain at his desk, and in each instance he conferred with them before rendering judgment. Most interesting of the cases was that of a young Klabit girl, who was accused of stabbing another girl of her tribe for trying to steal a sweetheart. Neither could have been more than twelve or thirteen Sullen-faced, they stood at the rail awaiting judgment; odd little figures in their red sarongs and something like a shawl about the upper part of their bodies. Andreini listened carefully; then loosed a stream of Malayan. When he stopped, the girls left the room together. Evidently he had let the culprit off with a warning not to do it again; a warning to both probably—one not to steal a sweetheart; the other not to stab. "There is a good deal of that kind of thing," he told me later. "Among the Klabits the women do the courting, and these things happen." When a major case arises, it is referred to headquarters in Kuching.

"They did things differently before we came," Captain Andreini said. "One hears rumours and reads in the old books about the ordeals with which they decided on the guilt or innocence of the accused. One was a matter of diving. The contestants were led to the river and forced to plunge. The one who came up first was adjudged the loser. To make it more interesting the contestants put up stakes gongs, perhaps, or brass or silver ornaments. When even that incentive to stay under was not strong enough, friends would sometimes hold their heads under water. Our methods of establishing guilt or innocence must seem singularly easy."

There were arak drinking and dancing on the grass in front of the fort that night. And the dances were no doubt the wilder for the arak—a crystal clear liquor made from the sap of the palm, and fiery as the taquila of Mexico. A spear dance first. Two men faced each other from opposite ends of a mat, on which two spears were laid. They twisted rhythmically their naked brown bodies, and clapped their hands. With trunks bent slightly forward they began to move their arms in what might have been setting up exercises except for the sinister meaning that one felt. Feet were lifted and set down again in grotesque movements. After a few minutes of this manœuvring each took up his spear and shield, and they passed each other, back to back, each making swift, sudden thrusts at an imaginary enemy. There were many such

passings before they faced about, crouched, and slowly moved toward each other; in a perfect simulation of a stealthy creeping through the jungle. Then came a sudden lurch and thrust, and one of them fell.

There was a monkey dance, too, that was eloquent of the jungle. A Kayan fortman crouched, gestured, and twisted his face into simian likeness When he reached one long arm above the other and swung from branch to branch of a tree, and sat chattering and scratching, I could hardly believe he was a human being. Had I held any lingering doubts about Darwin's grasp on truth, they would have vanished that night

Then, for their amusement, Captain Andreini and I took turns at dancing. A sorry figure I must have cut, unaccustomed as my legs were to the entanglements of a sarong, and my whole body to the movements I put it through, but I was not going to be outdone by the captain in willingness to be entertaining, even though I might be in grace. And our antics pleased those native men. It is by such acts of friendliness, of being willing to meet them on their own ground, that the captain had won the affection and confidence that everywhere was manifested.

Next morning we were up with the lark; or rather with the parakeet. This was the day set to start on the tour of inspection of the Trusan River; we were to enter a much wilder country than we had yet seen We travelled in two

prahus; one held our party and the crew, the other held the cook, his helper and the foremen. The morning was half gone before we came on a sign of human life.

As the river widened we sighted a fair-sized kampong. Every one in the village must have turned out to meet us, for there were probably forty men and boys, waiting at the river bank when we drew near. The Sarawak flag had told them that it was Captain Andreini's boat; sometimes it is months between his visits to these remote places. Anxious to make photographs of some of the members of this picturesque reception committee, I stepped out of the boat on to what seemed to be swamp, and instantly sank to my armpits. The swamp is not used to heavyweights, and the crew had to abandon everything else to pull me out. Many that were sick flocked about the captain, bringing to him, in pathetic hope of help, tuberculosis, fever, and jungle sores that marred and scarred and whitened the brown bodies until they looked like a garment over the flesh. And while he was engaged with this tragic business, I clicked away at my camera, and Staite kept the Victrola going. That was a job at which he and I had to take turns. We had tried to break in a chief's son who was one of our paddling crew, but not even he would have any dealings with that mysterious box. The natives brought us rice, cakes and honey, and we tore off bits of cloth for them, which instantly, with deft hands, they twisted into loin-cloth, sarong,

or turban. Yellow was the favourite colour; I was to learn that the different districts were attracted by different colours.

An hour of rest and diversion put us in trim for the difficult work of the afternoon. Harder and harder had grown the pulling as we went up stream and neared the rapids "Ah, chah!" one of the boys at the paddles would shout every now and then, evidently to hearten himself and the others. The aspect of the river banks changed with the higher country. Instead of dense growths of Nipa palms were stretches of pebbled beach. There were many rocks, too; large ones in mid stream, making vigilance and adroit steering necessary.

We made three of the rapids that afternoon Swift and difficult they seemed at the time, but in comparison with those we took the next day they were baby affairs. The stronger rapids were too dangerous to attempt except by daylight, and the captain had so timed our journey that at sundown we arrived at the house of a Bisaya chief. Had it not been for this hospitable shelter, we would have made camp beside the river, with palm leaves for bed. Mosquito netting would have been the one article indispensable for comfort, but so it was in the home of the chief.

The Datu had, of course, no idea that he would be called on to shelter three white tuans and sixteen other men, but he showed no surprise as we came up the path toward his house; his hospitality was perfect. Through the captain, he made us all welcome,

and bade us enter. That was an invitation easier to give than to accept so far as I was concerned, for there were no steps leading up to the house. In lieu of them was merely a round pole, placed almost perpendicularly, and with a few notches for footholds. This high level of the house is a preventive measure against being washed away in the seasons of heavy rainfall, which is sometimes as much as thirteen inches in twenty-four hours. Also, it is to prevent the entrance of wild animals, and it is almost as discouraging to a white man who had neglected the gymnasium as to a wild boar. Staite and the captain had no difficulty, but it took the combined efforts of all the crew, partly with hoisting, and partly with pushing, to get me up. It was not, I am convinced, a dignified entrance that I made into the home of the Datu. I landed all in a heap. And then I was afraid to move about, lest I fall through to the ground again, and have it all to do over, for the boards of the floor were very narrow, and very wide apart.

The house did not differ greatly in style from those farther down the stream, it was the same barnlike structure running far back to make room for the numerous kin. But the country round about was much wilder than any we had seen. There had been no clearing of brush, and high grass grew on the narrow trail which led down to the river.

We squatted on the mats with the chief, who wore only a loin-cloth. It is odd, but these people do not look naked. The brown skin seems a garment. Members of the Datu's family hovered in the back-

ground, and still farther away crouched the slaves. Thus far I had seen but few women, but here there were probably a dozen, some wore skirts and a sort of shawl, and one was gay in a plaid sarong. Of all ages they were, and the ages hard to estimate, for with them forty is already old. There were many children, too, and little babies. Probably several of these women were wives of the chief. He was unquestionably in a position to afford several, and it is permitted by his religion, the Mohammedanism imposed by the Arabs, but modified and mixed with the tribe's own hereditary superstitions. But though polygamy is permitted it is seldom practised except by the datus, rajahs and sultans. "Many wives, much confusion" is the manner in which one native phrased his objection. Probably he knew whereof he spoke, and had simplified his household by the divorce, which is a trifling matter. Any number of trivial reasons provide the excuse. The wife is handed back to her parents with a small present to square the affair. A bag of paddy, a few chickens or a strip of cloth is quite sufficient.

I offered chocolates to one of the women, and to the small girl who stood beside her. Though a failure as a delicacy, the sweets were not unused. As the brown stuff softened in their warm hands, they rubbed it on their legs, like an ointment.

But all knew well what to do with the cloth, which we at once began to distribute. Here the yellow calico favoured in the last kampong was passed by, and blue was chosen. Feeling like clerks behind a

counter, we tore off pieces and passed them out until every one in the room was supplied, giving to each man and woman perhaps a yard, and small pieces to the children. And we distributed tobacco also, and with it they were almost as much pleased.

Staite took a vacation from his tobacco and dry goods business long enough to mix a gin sling. He offered a drink not only to the chief, but also to one of the women. Both drank, but it was evidently merely through courtesy or curiosity. Their jaws chattered when they had swallowed it.

Our cook, who had followed us with dishes and food, was busy in the centre of another circle, cooking over logs burning on a grate. When he had filled the plates they were passed from hand to hand, and finally reached our laps Cigarettes followed dinner. I offered a Manila cigar to the chief; evidently the first he had ever seen. He gravely watched me while I lighted my own, then began to smoke his. When half through he must have decided it was an experience to be shared, for he passed the cigar to the man who sat nearest him It went the rounds among the men and boys, coming finally to the mouth of a five year-old child, who had taken several puffs before his mother snatched it away and returned it to the chief. While we smoked the captain and the Datu talked. Though I had out my Malayan dictionary, I could get nothing.

"Everything is all right here," the captain told me. "There have been no crimes since my last

visit. Everyone is happy and contented. The paddy crop is good"

I lay back on my mat and watched the chief. There was something splendid in his untroubled face and proud bearing. Here was a contented life, with no struggle for the ever unattainable. I thought of our cities with their slums. Manifestly civilisation is not what it is cracked up to be.

It was late, and I joined Staite and the captain under the mosquito net stretched over bamboo sticks in the corner. Pigs squealing, roosters crowing, babies crying awakened me. Evidently it was dawn Babies may cry at any time, but one can count on pigs and roosters playing the game according to stricter rules On the captain's advice I had left my watch behind. "You'll get used to the sun as a time piece," he had said. "It's reliable, and never needs repairing. Besides, time doesn't matter."

But time did matter that morning, for I was to go fishing with the Datu. It had been arranged the night before through the captain. I dressed, slid down the pole and joined the Datu in his tiny prahu, which he paddled with bamboo sticks. But this, I soon saw, was a different kind of fishing from any I had ever done. We took no hook and line, no net, nor yet the tooth-brush tackle I had used in Sandakan. The chief carried a spear and a bottle of dark brown fluid. When we arrived at the opposite bank he poured some of the liquid from the bottle into the water, and sat watching. I also

OUR HOSE AND DISAYA CHIEF, AND HIS REGINE, ON TRUSAN RIVER.

RAIDS ON TRUSAN RIVER, SARAWAK

watched. After a little while, a fair-sized fish rose, belly up, to the surface. The chief speared him; and there was our breakfast. The liquid, I was told, is the extract of tuba root, which makes a toxic combination with the water, and causes the fish to come up for air. Fish are caught in large quantities by this method; big fishing parties go out for the purpose.

A method I saw used in another village requires a wooden duck for decoy. Hooks, fastened underneath the duck, are baited with berries. Soon the motion of the duck shows that the fish have bitten, and the fisher in the boat merely paddles up, and lifts the duck from the water.

We did not linger over our fish breakfast—which, by the way, had more bones than meat—but were soon afloat in our own prahus. Between us and the police station at the juncture of the Trusan and the Tungoe which we were to make that night stretched many miles of water, and held the nineteen rapids we had yet to take. Before the day was over we were to grow accustomed to travelling through stretches of water that seemed to be boiling with huge rocks sticking through in menace to our boats. We climbed falls, some of them reminded me of the Kaiteur Falls in British Guiana; others were like the rapids between the Lakes of Killarney. There was the same rush of seething water, calming suddenly into pools of incredible peace. The one stop we made was at a Dyak hut close to the river. It was a most important stop, for there we changed to the

Datu's prahu, better adapted than ours to the most dangerous stretches.

The prahu was probably twenty feet long, was hollowed out of a single tree, and round at the bottom. Bow and stern were fastened with rattans instead of nails, so that it would give in the very probable event of being whirled against rocks. It was buoyant in the falls, and was manageable with a long, sweeping stroke

Here we began to buck the real rapids. The cook's prahu was left behind, with instructions to start considerably later, to lessen the danger of ours being swirled against it. Little paddling could be done. In the worst places the boat was forced upward with poles. Miraculous steering was required to keep clear of the boulders, which were bigger and more formidable with every mile that we went upstream In shallow places some of the men stood in the water and pushed the boat; others hauled from the banks with ropes made of vines and creepers. Never will I speak of lazy Malays, never have I seen men work harder than our crew did that day.

Nor was the passenger's strain purely nervous. In the more dangerous places we got out of the boat and made our way as best we could by climbing and jumping over the boulders. Bare-footed, of course, shoes were out of the question, and the stones were burning hot. Tortured with hot irons is more than a term to me now. To stop for breath and rest was impossible. There was nothing to do but jump on and on, with the blazing sun above and hell below.

I should have liked to watch the men, swarming about the boat—pushing, heaving, pulling—but I dared not look away from those rocks. The captain saw that I was getting groggy, and called to one of the men to leave the boat and go to me. I grasped his shoulder as I jumped. It helped a little, but not much

I made resolutions about gymnasiums if I ever got back to civilisation Then I jumped again, and seared a fresh bit of flesh. But a gymnasium wouldn't cool off those stones I reflected. Still, if I could jump faster and farther it would help. . . . Never did upholstered chair seem so luxurious as that hard seat in the boat when finally I was back on it.

After an eternity we glimpsed a bamboo shack high on a ridge, and knew we had reached our destination. The police station is a flimsy structure of bamboo and lumber, the whole cost was probably not more than twenty dollars worth of tobacco. It looked to us a haven of rest and comfort. And while we stretched out, resting, the cook's boat arrived. He was a welcome sight as he climbed the trail; a string of live chickens over his shoulder, and a frying pan in his hand.

Sunrise found the captain and myself again in the prahu, poling toward one of the inlets of the river. We had started for a dip, and must find a place reasonably safe from crocodiles. The little excursion took us past a spot on the river bank where a number of our men stood around a fire.

I saw one of them cast something into the flames. An altar fire, it was; they were probably making sacrifice to the wild spirits of the water that had spared them yesterday But what of to-morrow?

In dressing, I was amazed to find I could still wear shoes The lotion I had rubbed into my feet the night before had worked wonders, though at the time of application I had had little hope that my feet would be in condition to tramp in the jungle on the hunt we had planned. We had brought hunting togs, complete even to puttees, and we set out early hoping to bring down a wild boar, or a deer at the very least I was armed with an ancient army and navy revolver, lent by the captain; it was almost as heavy as any animal I might shoot with it. But no deer rustled the trees. No wild boar could be discovered. Snakes writhed to shelter at our approach. There were plenty of monkeys, too, but why shoot at those friendly, chattering little cousins of ours? Finally the captain aimed high, and brought down an eagle. I was glad it was a bird I could recognise, for I had heard the tale of a hunter who, somewhere about here, had shot a bird and carried it into a Dyak hut. And there they had told him it was an omen bird that he had killed; and, moreover, that the bird was some close kin of theirs—an aunt, or something of the sort. The hunter had a close shave to escape with his life.

We made slow progress, for the jungle was dense. Once the captain left us while he visited an isolated

Murut hut, a place he did not dare to take us. Our presence would not be understood, strange rumours and ultimate trouble might arise. The gravity of the danger which comes from the superstitions of the natives may be seen from the following incident: Not long ago an excavation to divert the course of a stream was made in the district. A native was drowned while at work. That night a murder was committed. From these two unrelated happenings sprang the rumour that the government had ordered that the excavation be filled with heads. The natives promptly made war on a neighbouring tribe, with the evident intention of obtaining heads enough. The Datu brought word to Captain Andrewi, who instantly took measures to bring peace. He takes no chances on arousing suspicion unnecessarily.

It was during his absence at the Murut hut that I, wandering away from Staite and the native, came on an interesting trap set to catch birds and other animals. A stick tied to the end of a post and pulled apart from it formed the spring. At the end of the stick was a bamboo spear. This murderous kind of trap has been forbidden by the government, for more than one man, coming on it unawares, has been killed. Strange that it should have been in the place I found it, for the trap is typically a Dyak contrivance, and there are few Dyaks in that territory.

The next day we returned to Fort Trusan. It had taken us two days to ascend the seventy miles of river. We made the return trip in six hours. I

determined to remain in the boat, for though none better than I understood the danger at the spots where the water plunged over the rocks, I remembered the splendid work done by our crew. Also, I remembered the feel of the hot stones to my bare feet, and my frenzied jumping.

The captain disapproved of my decision. "You're foolhardy. The boat might be broken to bits, and you be dashed to death against the rocks," he called to me from the shore.

"You know the cable address if it happens," I yelled back, and kept my seat in the boat.

Then I heard the captain warning the corporal to be careful, and the corporal's answer: "If he drowns, I too will be dead." We shot into the rapids. We swirled in and out among the rocks It was like shooting the chutes, plus boulders. In the quiet spots the men called "Ah, chah" to each other. And I shouted, "Ah, chah!" We made it, as I said before, in six hours, but they were six hours of danger.

The real thing happened once, and was, as always, unexpected. It came at a place which had seemed fairly safe, and the Captain and Staite were taking the chances of the boat with me. The prahu, swiftly rushed down stream by the lower rapids, suddenly struck a resistance. It veered diagonally, and would surely have tipped over if two boatmen had not jumped out, and righted it. Their investigation discovered a big tree trunk about a foot under water, blocking the passage between the two

rocks we had steered to avoid. The boat had bumped into it, and had come to rest hard up against the tree. While the three of us were still rejoicing in our escape, for the boulder's head did not look inviting for personal contact, we were already puzzling our brains how to get out of the mess. The natives' minds worked faster than ours. They grabbed our few pieces of luggage, and helped us out on to the tree trunk. We had our guns in our hands to keep them dry, and also to be ready for the very probable crocodile. With their passengers safe, the boatmen let the prahu fill with water, and pushed it, thus weighted, under the trunk. They caught it as it rose to the surface on the other side Emptying it of the water, and getting us settled and once more on our way was a matter of a few moments. We finished the journey without further accident. Trusan, when at last we reached it, had the feeling of home.

Fort Lawas, twenty miles across country from Trusan, and on the Lawas River, was to be the next stop on our itinerary. There being no waterways, the trip had to be made on foot. Our luggage was started a little in advance of us; carried by prisoners from Fort Lawas, that the captain had commandeered by runner. At daybreak I set out alone, the captain and Staite having given me an hour's handicap It was not long before I overtook the luggage-train—a dozen men under guard, each carrying a piece of baggage One had Staite's heavy English bag; another carried mine. An

unlucky devil had my Victrola on his back. It, like the bags, was tied with broad bands of bark, with loops to go over the shoulders, and one around the forehead. I noticed that he used the head-band only when going uphill, and relieved the strain by bending the head forward. Still another of those naked brown baggage men carried my army bag which, though there was no way of locking it, usually contained valuable articles. It went with me through Sarawak, Siam and Sumatra, and never an article was stolen. This cross-country journey was typical of the work done by the prisoners. As much outdoor work as possible is found for them; thus are they kept fit and contented as well as useful, which is as it should be in every country.

For my tramp I had dressed in canvas running pants, brown shoes without stockings, and an army shirt, woollen, the better to protect me from the burning sun. The captain had lent me a cane, which proved most useful in crossing bridges—trunks of trees over gullies ranging from six to twenty feet deep. Had I fallen, I should have landed among snakes—the one sinister suggestion in beauty that seemed all-pervading. Never in my life have I so strongly felt the beauty of the world as on that lonely walk through the jungle. Orchids hung from the trees. Black and green butterflies floated in the air. Singing birds gaily coloured, took flight as the brush rustled about me. The prosaic, workaday world seemed as remote as when one soars above it in an aeroplane. In this universe of inexpressible

loveliness, people had no part for miles there was nothing to remind one of humanity. And it was not a human being that I longed for. But again and again my thought went to Jerry, my Airedale friend at home. How he would have enjoyed that walk, sniffing the strange new smells, chasing the fluttering bits of colour, and bounding back now and then out of sheer loyalty to me! I did long for Jerry's companionship. The road is rarely used except by the captain, in that twenty-mile walk through the jungle I met only one person—a native who was changed into a statue with amazement at the sight of me.

A short distance out of Lawas we for the captain and Staite had overtaken me came on a clearing where men and women were at work planting paddy. Timber and shrubs had been burnt, and only the tree stumps were left. The method of work was this: The men made holes about a foot apart in the ground. They were followed by women, who dropped seeds into the holes. The weeding, when the time comes for it, is the work of the women; as also is the reaping, but the men carry home the heavy loads. Then the grain is separated from the stems, and is put on a rattan sieve which one sees fixed between four posts on the verandahs of the native houses. Threshing is done by treading the paddy through this sieve. Round bark bins in the lofts of the houses hold the grain until it is needed for food, when it is dried and pounded in mortars by the women. Thus freed from the last husk, the paddy

has become rice—the most important article of food to the native.

Signs of cultivation surround Fort Lawas. The kampong is spick and span; the houses are painted white, each has its bit of green lawn The fort—Captain Andreini's headquarters—stands high on a knoll. The flag was hoisted at our approach; but our heartiest welcome came from two Irish terriers, Murut and Miri, and a small brown boy and girl who were children of fortmen. These were five-year-old Leyda, and her playmate, a Kayan boy. Children and dogs came tumbling toward us in a real welcome home to the captain Lawas was the largest and most important of the forts we visited. It held, moreover, books and pictures and all the things that go to make a home for a man of taste and cultivation.

We were so fortunate as to arrive in time for a ceremony in honour of the birth of a Murut baby. A canopy on the lawn in front of one of the houses covered a table spread with a white cloth and heaped with good things to eat. There were chairs, too, which, like the tablecloth, had been lent by the captain. He led Starte and me over to the table which was surrounded by the male relatives of the baby "This," said the captain, presenting a Murut in more than the usual amount of clothes, "is the child's father." We shook hands, and I dare say I said the things one always says. The proud father bowed. "Tabek, Tuan," he said.

"This," said the captain, "is the child's grand-

father." And, introducing another, "This is the child's uncle."

Each in turn said "Tabek, Tuan." The world swarmed with male relatives, but it was all a little suggestive of the play of Hamlet with the Prince of Denmark omitted, for we caught no glimpse of the child himself. Within the house we saw a group of very old men hobnobbing, and from a room farther back came a sound of chanting. It was there evidently that the child lay beside his mother.

Next morning, Captain Andreini sprung a sensation. "There will be a white lady here at dinner to-night," he said. Staite and I were hard to convince, we had supposed that the entire white population of Sarawak two hundred and fifty strong, with only forty women—was at Kuching, more than three hundred miles away. But the white lady really came a Scotch girl, red haired and wholesome and charming, and with a burr in her speech. She had only lately come out from home, as the bride of a young assistant on a rubber plantation, six miles from Fort Lawas. With her was her husband, and the manager of the estate, a gay-hearted Irishman. These last were left to Staite and me for the evening, the bride and the captain danced to the music of the Victrola. It was a rare treat for Andreini after his two years of exile. The Englishman's home-sickness always becomes acute at the sight of an English face Kipling's disgusted Tommy, longing in London for, "a neater, sweeter maiden, in a cleaner, greener land," may be true to

life after he has returned home; but while still on the outposts it is the memory of some English face that stands for romance. The girl just out from home reminds him of the one that is still there.

It was far past midnight when the motor-boat which had brought our guests took them away again. Though it was probably the only one in all Sarawak, its chug, chug, chug in those waters seemed an anachronism. That sound belonged to another part of the world, another sphere of existence.

It was in that same motor boat, with the Irishman at the wheel, that we set off for the last station we were to visit - Merapok, which lies at the foot of the mountains between British North Borneo and Sarawak. We did not take a direct course, but turned into one of the tributary rivers in order to visit an American who is experimenting with the production of gutta percha. Farther and farther we penetrated into the wilderness, making many turns in the network of rivers, which wound through swamps, flat country with mountains beyond, and forests which grew so close to the water we seemed to be floating on tree-tops because of the reflection. A narrow lane of water darkened by overhanging trees brought us in sight of his shack, and in a moment I saw a white man, in singlet and shorts, running toward us out of the forest. The most solitary soul alive, he seemed, but from the pace he made, he was a Crusoe eager to escape from his solitude.

"We daren't stop the engine," the captain called. It had been showing signs of exhaustion,

and we were afraid that, once stopped, it would not start again. Crusoe leaped from the bank and landed in our boat. "I started as soon as I heard that chugging," he said.

He asked a dozen questions without waiting for answers; our coming was evidently the event of many months. Only at long intervals can the captain make this detour. He always takes along whatever newspapers have arrived since his last visit, those from Singapore which come about once a month, and the English papers, which all colonists read with a thoroughness undreamed of by those who have newspapers for daily fare. I learned not to try to talk politics with the dwellers in the jungle, they always knew so much more about it than I did.

Crusoe grabbed the bundle of papers and tucked it under his arm. Then, remembering that he was being shanghaied, he put it down again. A Californian, he proved to be, and judging by appearance, must be as physically fit as when he came to the jungle. A life as simple as that of the natives, and the eating of native food form his recipe for withstanding the wear and tear of a climate that usually wrecks the health of white men. He was eager for news of the States, and, being a native son, especially of The State.

"What wouldn't I give for a sight of San Francisco!" he said. "The Gate, and the hills, and the fogs, and the lights! And think of the old town being dry!"

At Merapok, while the captain talked with the

chief, we others overhauled the engine. A fortunate precaution, for we were barely back in our boat and on our way, when a sudden darkness fell.

"Storm," said the weatherwise jungle dwellers.

The sun had disappeared We tried to take shortcuts back to the main stream, but made no headway. The storm broke suddenly; the rain came in torrents. It is impossible to know how long the downpour lasted, for the sun had been our timepiece, and now there was no sun. The Irishman at the helm was as cool as though such emergencies were a daily occurrence, but every one of us were aware of the danger The water was utterly black. Fallen trees blocked our way. Had we been overturned, nothing could have saved us. It would have been left to the crocodiles to pull us out; and the mud-banked side streams harboured many.

The crocodiles are ever ready; a hideous danger always present in the lives and minds of the jungle dwellers. "May I be killed by a crocodile if I am guilty," say the natives in protestation of innocence. It is the direst death they know. The crocodile is an instrument of vengeance, ever menacing. Though in the past weeks, I had grown junglewise in many things, I did not realise the full danger until the next day when, off Brueni, I saw one of the huge, sluggish creatures kill a child. The little girl had been flying a kite from the verandah of a shack. The string broke, and the kite fell into the water. I, standing on the starboard side of the little *Peter Duff* watched her spring after it; the moment she

reached the water I saw something that looked like the trunk of a tree catch her, and drag her out of sight. Frightened by our boat, the crocodile dropped the child, but she was dead and horribly mangled when brought to land

But, to go back to the storm· The Irishman at the helm was dexterous, and the waiting crocodiles were disappointed. The rain stopped. Stars and the moon shone, and in their light we sighted Awart-Awart, the first kampong we had visited. There the *Gajah Mina* awaited us We boarded her, turned our backs on the wilderness reluctantly turned our backs, and sailed away toward Labuan, which stood for civilisation. And to us as we sailed came from the river the voices of the Irishman, the Scotchman and the American, singing:

"In fourteen hundred and ninety-two
A Dago from Itaalec,
He very smart, he very bright,
He sell the hot tamale,
He went to the queen, and he said 'Dear Queen,
If you give me ships and cargo. . .' "

Their voices were lost to us. Lucky fellows! They were going back to the jungle.

Two scenes come to my mind when I think of my good-bye to Sarawak. One was at Fort Lawas, the last hour of our stay. At tiffin the captain gave to Staite and to me each a sword that had been worn by some old chief. He gave to me some charms also; they were made of carved wood and boars' tusks. "They won't be just curios to you," he said.

"You'll think of them as a part of these people's lives." Then, in formal leave-taking, came the datus of the district; the military and police force, headed by the corporal; the servants, headed by Cookie, and little Leyda and her playmate. With the terriers at our heels we went down to the boat.

The other scene is of the *Gajah Mina* as I looked down from the companion-way of my steamer in the harbour of Labuan. The curious sailing craft, flying the red, yellow and black flag of Sarawak; the oddly-assorted crew with clothes ranging from loin-cloth to military uniform, and the Englishman in white duck. All just as it had been on that morning when I first saw it. But now it was not strange to me. It had become a part of my own life.

I waved and called good-bye to Captain Andreini. And to the crew I called, "Ah, chah!"

"Ah, chah; Ah, chah!" in many voices came back to me.

CHAPTER III

THE LAND OF KING RUBBER AND PRINCE TIN

EAGER to be on my way, I paced the deck of the *Deli*, in the harbour of Labuan. The steamer had been ready to start an hour before when James, the fat old agent of the Sarawak Government, had hurried me on board. But "ready to start" is an elastic term, especially in the tropics where time is made only for the wicked. The culprit responsible for the delay in this case was an obstreperous caribou, the last of a bunch of cattle being taken on board for shipment. From the capers he cut on the narrow wharf, terrorising the mild-mannered Malays who were gathered about, he might have had an inkling of the fate in store for him in the slaughter-house at Singapore. It took the combined efforts of half a dozen of the ship's crew finally to slip the rope over his horns and hoist him into the hold.

The only passengers besides myself to take an interest in the affair were two men from El Paso, Texas, on a tour of the world. They had seen range doings at home, and had suggestions to offer about the way to throw the rope; suggestions which, being in English, were of scant service. The others were all settled on lounge chairs, pantingly awaiting

the cooling breeze that would come when the steamer got under way. They were old-timers. Something more exciting than this bit of local colour would be needed to induce them to expose themselves to the broiling sun. The two dozen passengers seemed a crowd to me, fresh from the wilderness of Sarawak. Most satisfying, too, after the wilderness, were the spotlessness of the steamer, and the beverages cooled with ice. There had been no lack of beverages in Sarawak; but never any ice.

The first meal at the well-appointed table seemed like a banquet. The passengers made an assembly typical of those parts. There were two children, being taken to a boarding-school in Java by their parents who lived in Kudat. A planter from Jesselton and his wife were on their way "home" for the first time in twelve years. Young and very gay—the life of the short voyage—was an assistant on a tin mine in the Federated Malay States. He was only three years out from England, and was spending his first short holiday in taking a round trip on the *Deli* plying between Zamboanga and Singapore. There was a barrister, also English, of whom I remember little except that he gave me heart failure by mentioning that firearms could only be brought into Singapore by special permission. The treasured pistol that I had gone hunting with in Sarawak was in one of my bags. Somehow it must be smuggled in. The time I spent in planning ways and means was time wasted. My pistol was neither looked for nor inquired about. A lady travelling

alone her husband in one of the North Borneo ports had sent her on vacation to Singapore—suffered no lack of companionship. She and one of the Texas men became good friends on shipboard, but on landing, he dropped out of sight With only four months for a world tour, and a determination to see everything, he had not much time to give any one person—even a charming, unattached lady. But she, I take it, did not miss him, judging from the crowd of admirers I saw surrounding her at a tea dance at Raffles.

Three days of rest on the steamer, and we were at Singapore, and anchored opposite Johnson's Pier. Grey-haired David, the veteran hotel runner of the Raffles, and, like James, a Madrasee, appeared, took charge of my belongings, and we crossed to shore in the steamship company's launch. Disdainfully I walked past taxis, motor-buses and horse drawn gharries, and chose the time honoured rickshaw for my drive to the hotel. It was still too early for the bank, which was my most necessary port of call.

Perennially fascinating is Singapore, with its hundred tongues; its port alive with steamers, big and small, on their way to every part of the globe; and with its hustling, bustling life ashore. All the races of the world, representatives of every stage of civilisation jostle each other in the streets. I found the aspect of the city somewhat changed in the eight years since my last visit, but the changes are in the way of additions. The old is still there, unmodified, though crowded by the new For example, auto-

mobiles have multiplied, but the gharry and the rickshaw still carry travellers who prefer picturesqueness to speed.

Sunset finds many strollers on the Esplanade, watching the ball and tennis games on the green lawns set aside for sports. I enjoyed, too, walking along the very busy Raffles quay, with its mile of feeding stands for the coolies. Here, in these open-air markets filled with merchandise of every description, the Chinaman reigns supreme. Well he may, for he represents the majority of Singapore's three hundred thousand population. On the quay he is ever busy trying to make trade with customers of his own race, and with Hindus, Malays, Javanese, Tamils, Anamese, Cambodjans, and with many another out of the maelstrom of humanity that whirls in that busy harbour.

A cinema theatre was attracting crowds. I looked in. Charlie Chaplin was the star. Of all the audience the rickshaw coolies seemed the most appreciative; perhaps they were glad to see someone else getting the kicks, for once. The life of a rickshaw coolie is very hard. If he does not run fast enough to please his patron he is apt to get a jab in the ribs. If he goes too fast to please the police he is fined. Just that day, an ambitious coolie had run me into a street car, and had been fined a dollar (fifty cents in our money), which was a day's earnings. The entry in the police blotter read, "For exceeding reasonable speed, and endangering public safety."

I peeped, too, into the well-remembered cosy nook

on the second floor of John Little's big department store, set aside for the hungry and thirsty and flirtatious of the foreign born of Singapore. It was, as always, crowded. Everybody loves Little

But Singapore, with all the rest of the world, is changed, by the way. Much of the old time gaiety is gone; the Europeans are preoccupied and restrained. The planter is lying low, hoping for a better price for his product. The business man is having a bad time with the exchange situation, and the breathless race with competitors for the little business that is being done. The Chinese alone are prospering, and that only as a class. Individually great losses are being suffered. Recently some Tow Kays (Chinese bosses) lost hundreds of thousands of dollars in one deal, and they are "hitting the pipe" in order to forget. Of course in times like these all luxuries go begging for purchasers. An Indian dealer in High Street told me that he had just sold a bird of paradise for fifty Straits dollars twenty five dollars in United States money. In the old days there would have been a scramble for it at five times that price The lucky buyer was a lady from the China coast.

I did not linger in Singapore, for Bangkok had become my objective. But there came an invitation to visit some American friends in the Federated Malay State, Perak. I wanted to see my friends; wanted, too, to see that wonderful state which produces about forty per cent of the world's output of tin ore, besides much rubber. All my life I have

suffered—I use the word advisedly— from a fascination for mines. It has cost me much money to get acquainted with the mining of gold, silver, copper, lead, graphite and radium. I would now add tin to the list and to my education, thereby putting another spoke in my wheel of fortune, or puncturing its tire again, all as the luck held.

The Malay Peninsula was new ground to me. On previous journeys I had chosen the sea route between Penang and Singapore, and so had missed gleaning first-hand information about those states under British influence which up to thirty years ago had had no dealings with the civilisation to the east and to the west of them. In these thirty years the development has been magic. The three divisions of British Malaya are:- First: The Straits Settlements, which include Singapore, Malacca, the Dindings, Penang with the Province of Wellesley, and Labuan. Second: The Federated Malay States of Perak, Selangor, Negri, Sembilan, and Pahang. Third: The Non-Federated Malay States of Johore and Kelantan, Tringganu, Kedah and Perlis, ceded by Siam in 1909. The latter while under British protection, instead of being administered by British officers, have their own administration under the guidance of their protector. It seems a small difference, but is really a point of deep significance. When we read, some day, that the Non-Federated Malay States have entered the Federation, we shall know just what it means The remaking of the world has barely started. Other countries, inde-

pendent to day, will probably eventually seek the protection and advisement of other powers.

A railway, four hundred and sixty five miles long, runs the length of the peninsula. Except that a journey to Siam by this route would mean four days of dust, heat and other discomforts, little information was obtainable about it in Singapore. This method of advertising is quite comprehensible coming from the Singapore hotel keepers, who wish all peninsula travellers, bound for Siam, even though from as far north as Penang, to come down to Singapore, and there take the water route through the South China Sea and Gulf of Siam to Bangkok. But *variatio delectat* in travel as in all things else. I boarded the train at the little tank station to which old David had driven me in a gharry. After an hour's ride I arrived at Woodlands, the end station on the island, from which a ferry takes the passengers to Johore on the mainland, the point of departure for the F M.S. railway. I was no sooner aboard than I realised that the hotel keepers had maligned the railway. Equipment and roadbed are as good as are to be found anywhere.

Morning found me at Kuala Lumpur, the capital of the Federated Malay States. It was early, and the sun not yet strong, so as soon as my breakfast in the station hotel was over, I set out to drive through the town in a rickshaw. Substantial houses and villas standing in gardens along the borders of lakes and rivers; red laterite roofs, well-paved streets, all combined to make the beautiful little city suggest

an aristocratic European or American resort rather than the tropics. My trotting rickshaw man seemed quite out of the picture. There I first came to realise that for those who wish to enjoy the sensuous ease and beauty of the tropics, with hardship and danger expurgated, the cities of the Federated Malay States afford all that they desire. My enthusiasm must have been contagious, for though local pride is not supposed to dwell in the heart of a rickshaw coolie, mine, at thirty cents an hour, pulled his heavy load far out into the suburbs and back into town again, with never a stop Finally, instead of taking me to the station, he pulled up in front of a club—"The Spotted Dog," it was, far famed among planters. But I intended to catch that train, and induced him to go on.

Well-built houses, good roads travelled by many good automobiles were the things that impressed me most during the few hours' ride that took me on to Ipoh A few white men and women and children boarded the train at the various stations It was indeed a different world from any I had seen in recent months.

By lunch time I was with my friends in Ipoh Their home was a miniature château, hidden among palm trees, and in a garden typically Chinese, for the former owner was a Chinese tin operator. But other than the garden and the Malay servants, there was nothing of Oriental atmosphere. It was an American home; with a baby and a dog playing together on the floor,

My tin mine education began with a motor ride to give me a bird's eye view of the district. This was followed by a nearer acquaintance. The sight is an amazing one Vast machinery of the most modern type is in use; steam and electric power hoists, hydraulicking and dredging; and close beside work Chinese coolies with pick and shovel digging the black tin sand out of the shallow levels below the surface, just as their forefathers would have done The most modern methods and the most primitive are called into use to produce Perak's enormous output of tin.

Mining men are proverbial wanderers from one of the world's treasure troves to another. My guide had dug for pay ore in Siberia and in Peru, in South Africa and in Alaska. Some of the greatest dredges that I saw at work at Ipoh might claim something of the same spirit, for they had been used in gold mines two thousand miles up from the mouth of the Yukon River. Transported from the arctics to the tropics, they now, with a sweep of powerful arm, do the work of a thousand coolies

But the work of the thousand coolies is not to be despised. With their shovels and buckets they come and go in and out of the long sheds thatched with Nipa palms. The cheapness of this labour and the long years it has been in use makes this ancient method of mining profitable, yielding great riches to the lucky few Eu Tong Sen is a notable with his twenty-five millions of gold dollars He has two palaces in Ipoh; one more in Kampar, and a castle

with a garden and lake in Singapore. Art treasures selected in Europe by himself fill these various residences of the great Chinese tin magnate, the marble for his houses was brought from Italy.

Another romantic figure of the district was Loke Yen, who came as coolie to Ipoh, who at the time of his death a few years ago had four thousand coolies working in his mine. His son inherited fifty million dollars.

The incredible thing is that this country was virgin thirty years ago. Within these thirty years tin amounting to nine hundred million dollars has been taken out of the Kinta Valley. They call the Malay Peninsula the Land of the Planter, and while rubber is still king, mining is certainly near to the throne. In Ipoh, as in Kuala Lumpar, the Europeans live in most delightful conditions and surroundings. Their houses are like small palaces set in fairy gardens. But the jungle presses close. One morning on an early walk I came on the pudgy, unmistakable track of a tiger. After that I kept strictly to the automobile roads, and of these there are hundreds of miles running through jungle and plantation. From them one glimpses the Perak River, and now and then whirls past a Chinese temple carved in the greyish rocks that loom up like toy mountains.

It was by motor that I continued my journey; spinning along to Penang, one hundred and twenty miles north from Ipoh I made a brief, tourist-like stop at Kuala Kangsor, which was the seat of the late Sultan of Perak. I no more than glimpsed

PERAK RIVER NEAR IPOH FEDERATED MALAY STATES.

the sultan's three château-like palaces, and the imposing mosque, which stands on the hill. The city has also a Malay college, cut after the English pattern, but I whirled on without visiting it.

After leaving Kangsor the road climbed through mountains high enough to make me feel chilly—a novel sensation, and agreeable, but we soon dropped to the level again. Taiping welcomed me with the weather for which it is famous that is, a heavy rainfall. Good for vegetation is this abundant rain; the city is a garden of lawns, flowers and avenues shaded by andsena trees, whose yellow blossoms make fragrant the air for miles around. This garden city is the more astonishing and beautiful because it is surrounded by dumps, the remains of dredging. For many years Taiping has been the centre of mining operations. This district does not lend itself to irrigation, hence there is no cultivation round Taiping.

The Krian district, when I reached it, broke like a miracle of verdure. There in truth is the land of the planter. Immense rice fields, irrigated by the government, stretch on both sides of the highway. The clearing of the weed was under way when I passed through, so hundreds of natives—men, and women and children were at work in the flooded, muddy fields. Alternating with the rice fields were plantations of dark green rubber trees, cocoanut palm groves of a light green, and fields of tapioca and sugar cane.

As sunset approached, the road became more and

more crowded. The workers were stopping for the day lest the sudden disappearance of the sun, jungle fashion, should find them in the dark mud trenches. Everybody walked in the middle of the road. It was a trying time for the Malay driver of my little auto; only by constant tooting of his horn did he succeed in making any progress along the road.

There was a perfunctory stop at the Krian River by polite native guards, a sign that we were entering the strip of land that belongs to Great Britain. After that, I was soon at Prai, the terminal of the railroad on the mainland.

My first consideration was to learn about the train to Bangkok. I had a time-table, an unmanageable blue sheet more than a yard square, which a wide-awake young American had found for me in Ipoh. How wideawake he was I had not at the time realised, for my later experience convinced me that this time-table was the only copy extant. When I showed it to the Bombayan station master at the little wooden shack which is the depot in Prai, he regarded it with mild surprise, but neither confirmed nor denied the information that it gave. He admitted, however, that there would be a train to Bangkok some time. Schedule was obviously immaterial.

A series of questions brought the following scraps of information:

Certainly there were through trains, also locals.

Of course the trains did not run at night.

No train could run except in daylight.

There would be three nights of laying up.

When, a trifle baffled, I returned to the subject of local and express trains, and pinned him down to the difference, I discovered that it is the passenger and not the train that is "local" or "express." If the passenger stops at a rest house only one night that is, while the train is laying up, waiting for daylight he is "through." If he tarries longer at the rest house, he is "local." The station-master seemed exhausted by my questions, so I troubled him no further, except to leave my luggage in his care. I knew that whether I decided to be local or flier, I must catch my train, whenever it left, at Prai. But since a train departure was manifestly not imminent, I crossed the ferry to Penang, in quest of more information. No one at that station could tell me anything about the time-table, but I was informed that a train would leave at three the next afternoon. So I put up for the night at the Eastern and Oriental hotel.

I was up early to visit again, after many years, the Chinese temple Ayer Itam, hidden in the high palms a half-hour's walk out of town. Whatever one's faith, a visit to a beautiful shrine lifts and lightens the spirit. Then, swiftly, I turned my thought back toward mundane things. I changed my Straits dollars into Siamese ticals and satangs. I tried to find some books about Siam; met with as little success as at Singapore, and decided that I must write one. Then I crossed the Bay and boarded my train.

With its buffet parlor car, and little table adjustable in front of the traveller, the train had a suggestion of home. Across the little table I talked with a fellow traveller, typical of the train-mates one finds in those parts. He was manager and credit man for a large condensed milk company, and whiled away the time by telling me about his customers—Chinese merchants for the most part.

"When the rice crop is bad, and money is unusually scarce, I have to climb on an elephant and go out after the 'lame ducks' in the back country," he said.

At Padang Besar we entered the Siamese Provinces of the Malay Peninsula, and stopped there for change of train, and baggage, and the custom house formalities. The Siamese officials were in pale blue uniforms, with white leather belts. They were barefooted, and with their black hair sticking out from under their caps or straw hats, they looked like little brunette brothers of Buster Brown. "Muang Thai," the native name for Siam, means "Land of Freedom," and I did not wish to aid in the violation of this exalted claim by permitting one of those small officials to examine my luggage. Perhaps it was more curiosity about the contents of the fourteen receptacles than any serious intent of examination that caused him to put his hand on one of my bags, for he promptly acted on my suggestion that he let it alone, and run away.

A combination club car for first and second class, and three or four coaches for third class passengers made up the train; it was typical of all those run

by the Siamese company The coaches were well filled, for many Siamese made the short runs between way stations. Slightly smaller than either the Malay or the Chinaman, they, as a class, look sturdy, and give no suggestion of the malaria one might expect from the swampy jungles through which we passed. These jungles are crossed by rivers which, though deep in places, are generally shallow and muddy, and are navigable only by boats of the lightest draft.

We passed through rice fields, and through dense forests. Now and then granite rocks covered with clay loomed by the road. Then we swung into a flat country of tall grass, and with a background of mountains several thousand feet high. Our first night was spent at a rest house in Alostar. At Tung son, where we spent the second night, I decided to become a local instead of an express passenger, for there came a chance for new experience.

CHAPTER IV

IN CAMP WITH WORKING ELEPHANTS

THE milkman I had met on the train and I sat on the verandah of the rest house in Tungson, trying to make ourselves comfortable. There were many cooling drinks. Behind each of our chairs was a small Siamese boy, shooing away mosquitoes, and fanning life into the air that wrapped us about like a wet sheet. Into the milkman's talk of his native Scandinavia—cruel talk, in the tropics—broke comment of excitement in the village.

"Two elephants roamed through a while ago." An English prospector of tin mines brought the word. "Must have strayed beyond their feeding area around one of the big lumber camps."

"They won't get too far," a man at the other end of the verandah called. "There'll be a couple of Laos keepers along soon, tracking them."

Lumber camps. Working elephants. I began to ask questions. So many that the English prospector, by way of escape, went to bring the man who had spoken of the Laos keepers. "Here is the best man on the peninsula to tell you what you want to know," he said.

The Englishman did not overstate. The man

he introduced is manager of the wood department of a great company with international connections. He is in charge of all the camps in the southern section of Siam where his company has leases from the government Under his management are five hundred men, and more than two hundred elephant labourers, felling timber which later becomes houses, boats, bridges, railway carriages and furniture. Some of it goes to Japan for carving. Out of my interest in his talk came an invitation to be his guest on his houseboat

I asked him what a houseboat had to do with a lumber camp.

" It's the only practicable way for me to live," he said. " On land there is always danger of attack from gang robbers and animals. Besides there are no roads in the jungle forests; only rivers. I move camp every two or three weeks because I must always be as near as possible to where the trees are being felled. You will realise all these necessities if you come out with me. I'm starting back in the morning."

I went, of course. It was a rare opportunity. I had seen elephants at work in India, but never in such numbers. Never, indeed, any under the guidance of a man whose language I could understand, and who was forester, lumberjack, sawmill machinery expert, hunter, elephant trainer, veterinary surgeon and a thorough judge of men and a handler of native labour, all in one. My host proved to be all these things.

Long before the sun rose next morning I was roused by Noah – I had christened him that because of the houseboat. In front of the verandah loomed four huge, unsteady shadows, still darker than the darkness Our elephant train was ready to start. We had far to travel that day, and must make the most of the morning coolness. One of the elephants gurgled whenever Noah came near, in affectionate recognition of his master. This was Noah's own mount

Because I was unused to this mode of travel, my host had had the boys arrange a couch with bamboo railings on top of Plai Hun (All elephants, I learned, have either Plai or Pang as a part of their names. Plai means male; Pang, female. Hun means silver.) A howdah, such as one sees in pleasure trains and processions was impracticable for this journey. Its height would impede progress through the woods.

The mahout made Plai Hun kneel for me to mount. The elephant bent a hind leg to form a step, and I scrambled up I was glad that I was not altogether a novice. Seven years before at Udaipur, Rajputana, India, I had ridden out to the Maharana's summer palace with the Hon. Fatch Lal Mehta, the Prime Minister. He talked much of Kipling, I remember, whose friend he was. But that had been a ride of only about ten miles, and along good roads; whereas this was to be a day's journey, and along jungle paths.

Single file the caravan moved through the silent

village. It was too early for humans to be astir, and the soft, padded feet of the elephants made no sound audible to us. Soon we had passed the last native hut, and had entered the track in the forest. It was not long before I was wet through from the dew on the leaves I brushed against, but that was no time to take account of a trivial detail like my physical condition. Nine feet in the air, reclining, and with my head on a pillow, I was borne along, rocked by the movements of my steed. A world of fresh sensations and impressions crowded upon me. The air was charged with the vitality of countless trees and plants. Stars twinkled above. I was gloriously happy to be alive, and thrilling with this new experience. This mood was followed by a realisation of the infinite smallness of human beings, and of nature's indifference to man's doings In the lulling peace of that moment, I felt that I never wished to be roused from the spell.

But I was roused; shaken out of my Nirvana by a lurch of Plai Hun He had sunk knee-deep into a water hole, and was out again quickly as he had gone in This was the first of many jolts, for the track became more and more uneven with soft earth, mud and ditches There were hills to climb, too, with steep slopes of wet clay, and small rivers to be forded. These Plai Hun sounded with his trunk before attempting to cross I realised now why elephants, not horses, had been chosen for the journey. No horse with a load on

his back could have made his way through that wilderness. There was no visible animal life except monkeys. They, clinging to the trees, were so close I might have touched them. No doubt there were plenty of snakes, too, but I, in my high perch, saw nothing that was on the path. We halted for lunch It was good to dismount and join my host I had begun to feel lonely on the back of Plai Hun, with no companion except the mahout who sat on the tusker's neck and stirred him up by giving an occasional jab with the back of a knife

Just before sunset we reached the river at a point littered with all sorts of craft- prahus, small and large, floating shanties, rafts with Nipa thatches, and larger, uncovered rafts. It was Noah's present camp At the far end, my host's ark was moored, as comfortable a floating house, I found, as the best of the houseboats on the Thames or the Sound On Noah's advice I added ten grains of quinine to my gin sling. Then, without waiting for dinner, I went to bed. It had been a day.

I was awakened at four thirty the next morning by the sound of a drum; the signal, I discovered, for the camp to come to life River and shore soon teemed with activity The rafting gang caught my interest first. In the river, standing waist high in water, were more than a hundred young Siamese, who tied with rattan the logs that had been dragged there by elephants the day

before. Ten logs were put together, with two crossbars A stout bamboo pole, called burb, was placed on each side of the raft. Without these burbs, Noah explained, the hard wood of the Mai (tree) Kiam, Mai Takien and Mai Intanin would sink Of the Mai Yang, which is soft wood, about eighty per cent would float. Other crews, also standing in the water, were busy measuring logs, and putting the company's brand on them.

On shore, the felling gangs were starting away; a mahout and two footmen to each elephant. Belated footmen came out of the jungle with their charges; gave them the morning bath, and started toward the felling camp. Elephants and men had come from far into the jungle. A full grown tusker that is, about twenty-two years old requires as much as eight hundred pounds of food a day; when he has been released from work, with iron hoop and chain gear removed, he forages far to get it. But however far he wanders, his foot men follow the trail of his huge footprints and bring him back

"Each footman recognises the track of his own elephant; and pays no attent on to other tracks," Noah declared. "I don't know how they do it. All the animal crews are made up of Laos from Northern Siam, and Kamos from French Cochin China. They are taller and hardier than the Siamese; better fitted for the work"

After breakfast, Noah and I walked into the jungle, to the nearest felling camp, about two

miles from the river. It was a Mai Yang station, with trees from two hundred to two hundred and fifty feet high, and from five to eight feet in diameter. A scaffolding about twelve feet high is built around the trees for the workman to stand on, for the tree is cut at that level. Teak and other hard woods, because more valuable, are felled much closer to the ground The twelve foot stump of the Yang is left because of the oil that will be extracted. Siamese were at work on these soft wood trees; the work on hard wood is done by the huskier Chinese.

"Kwan Plee," which means banana, is the name of the axe these workers use. It is a 3 × 10 axe blade, tied with rattan to a thin wooden handle, about three feet long, which looks like the branch of a tree. "We tried to introduce the American axe," Noah said, "but the natives prefer these, and that settled it Saws are impracticable, the natives would not know how to use them. As it is they manage very well; hacking away diligently with these strange-looking tools." We arrived just before a tree had been cut through. A shout of warning for everyone to get out of the way went up, and the workmen jumped from the scaffold. We speculated about which way the tree would fall, and, fortunately, guessed right.

"And here is something you will want to see," Noah said, when, at noon, the natives began to prepare their food—rice, of course. They rolled the uncooked rice in small palm leaves; jammed

it into a piece of bamboo, poured in water, plugged the ends with leaves, and leaned the odd cooking utensil against a sort of hearth, which they built on the ground. They used green bamboo, which will not burn After half an hour over the fire, they pierced the sticks with a knife, poured out the boiling water, put into the rice a bit of salt from the little bag that every native carries with him into the jungle. Sometimes herbs are added, which must make a dish interesting to the palate. The rice was as delicious as any I ever tasted.

For living quarters, the felling crew have nest like arrangements built in the trees, from twenty-five to thirty feet above the ground. Whole families live thus Men, women and children all show monkey-like dexterity in climbing to their nests. Snakes, wild buffalo, panthers, and even the rare tiger, make these curious quarters desirable for reasons of safety. They are temporary for the same reason that Noah lives in a houseboat —the frequent moving on of the camp. This happens every two or three weeks; that is, as soon as all the trees ready for cutting have been felled; and when it is advisable to take the elephants to new foraging ground. Eight hundred pounds of food daily for two hundred animals puts a heavy tax even on jungle abundance of grass and foliage, bamboo and bark

All the afternoon we rode about on small ponies, and watched the work in which the elephants were as busy as the men.

I saw the felled trees cut into logs; a hole was bored at one end and a chain passed through. The chain was then fastened to the elephants' gear. As many as six elephants were required to haul some of the bigger logs along the tracking path to the river, a mile or two away. There was much noise, the tuskers do not work without protest. They roar and groan and whinny, and real tears come into their big hazel eyes when the log is too heavy Sometimes they would stop in their tracks, refusing to pull at all. The Laos mahouts then used their knives, giving a quick jab, to start the elephants on, but in the main they seemed to be treated kindly. Suddenly a tremendous noise, all of them roaring together, reached me, and I thought something very terrible had happened They were, however, only voicing their joy that the day's work was done These Union Labourers had heard the afternoon drum, and every elephant had dropped his log Each knew that the time had come for hook and gear to be taken off, and after a dip in the river he would be free to roam in the jungle. Small wonder there was trumpeting.

We returned to the river in time to see animals and coolies all in the water together; refreshing themselves after the day of hard labour. "The drowning of a coolie is not an infrequent happening at these times, but little attention is paid to it by the other coolies," Noah said. "Human life counts for little here."

Dinner talk that night was about elephants. I

A "LABOUR UNION" AT WORK SOUTHERN SIAM

wanted to know all that Noah could tell me about the interesting creatures. How he secured them, trained them, kept them in condition. The information that he gave I am passing on as nearly as possible in his own words.

"Any responsible party, such as my company, can get from the Siamese Government, a licence for a drive. These drives are held in the dry season, for it is only then that a herd can be located From three to thirty five elephants are caught in one drive

"Old elephants cannot be trained for serious work. The best age for training is between three and fifteen, and from three weeks to two months is required to get them ready for our work. A tusker is full grown at twenty-two years. Seventy is not an unusual age for them to reach; in exceptional cases they live to be a hundred, but their period of greatest usefulness is between twenty-five and forty-five years.

"Their height is computed from their tracks Twice the circumference of the forefoot gives the height up to the shoulder. The tallest I ever saw was nine feet and six inches. Males average nine feet from the shoulder; females, eight. One judges between a good and an inferior tusker in the same way one does with horses; by conformation. An elephant's back should be flat. The clipping of their tusks, done because they work more easily in the logs and timber if the tusks are shortened, is a delicate operation which I trust to

no one but myself. Only the hard part is removed; if clipped too high the nerve is injured, and the animal may die Ivory thieves cause mischief that way I determine the point for clipping by measuring the distance between the eye and the root of the tusk. This distance is then measured on the tusk and indicates the end of the nerve The tusks grow again to their full length, and may be cut as often as three times in a tusker's life

"An elephant is good for work one hundred and fifty days in a year. During the busy season I work my animals three days in succession, and let them rest one. If they do not get enough work they are apt to get that disease called, in Siamese, 'Dok Nam Mann,' when they become petulant and savage. The symptoms are unmistakable. The temples below their ears swell, and a fatty substance oozes out Unless the animal is promptly chained he gets beyond control; destroys trees, uproots bamboos, and tramples everything in his path. But if he is chained before the danger point, and kept under guard a few days, he usually gets over the spell and is again fit for work. But sometimes he breaks his chains. If an elephant lies down, he is sick. He sleeps standing, and with his ears wagging. He likes to be brushed after his bath with the bark of a cocoanut. His nerves end at the surface of the skin, and he is as sensitive to a mosquito bite as are humans. When the tracking gear makes sores on his shoulders, as often

happens, quicklime is placed around the sores so the skin will not crack when he lies down to be treated. I jab sixteen grains of cocaine into the sides around the sores, and in about ten minutes they are deadened to sensation. Then I do a bit of cutting and pumping, getting sometimes from six to ten gallons of puss. After that the wound is washed with a syringe the size of an auto air pump, and nature does the rest.

"To look after the well being of the crew is another part of my job. The Kamos are less subject to disease than are the other tribes. They bear well the hardships of jungle life. They eat strictly jungle food, lizards, snakes and rats of all sorts. Fish is a great delicacy to them. They have none in their own country."

To give me a glimpse of another phase of the work, Noah next morning furnished me with a pony and one of his English speaking clerks, and we followed down stream the rafts I had seen launched at camp. The interesting periods were those when the rafts jammed together or bumped into shore. Then the mahouts and elephants that had followed along the river bank would wade in and lend a hand, and get the refractory raft again on its way by shoving here, and pulling there. The elephant's trunk is indeed his hand, and he uses it adroitly Though these rafts would reach the sawmill in two weeks, given ordinary luck, whole families lived on some of them Rafts from Chiengmai and Lampang, teak wood camps in the

northern part of Siam, are a year or sometimes longer in reaching the sawmill in Bangkok.

On our return we found Noah busy with a kindergarten class. The education of the four elephants that he was training for log pulling had not progressed far, but all knew their names and would whinny in answer when Noah spoke to them. They were Plai Sing (snake), Plai Tong (gold), Pang Den (red) and Pang Nun (short).

There was a dinner-party on the last evening of my stay in the lumber camp; with two headsmen of nearby villages as guests My contribution to the feast was a turtle bought from a native for two satangs Made into soup, it was our first course. The entire menu is worth recording in view of the location of that lumber camp, and the wild surroundings.

Turtle soup.
Blaben—a carp-like river fish.
Potatoes from Australia.
Asparagus from California.
Smoked ham from Denmark
Wild roast peacock, with stuffing of bamboo shoots. (Tastes like grouse.)
Tops of young palm trees. (Much like Cauliflower.)
Curry of snipe.
Gruyere cheese from Switzerland.
Mangosteens, pineapples and other fruit.
Aquavit, Rudesheimer, Pommery 1904, and Pilsener beer made in Japan.

When I think of that dinner, my enthusiasm about

Noah's approaching visit to New York is mixed with apprehension. The elephants in our menageries will seem to him lazy and uneducated. While I may camouflage an ark on the East River, it will be very dry inside. And that will be as much of a disappointment to my Noah as it would have been to the original one.

Our talk that night talk in which the chiefs joined, for both spoke English fairly well was of hunting, and of women Hunting was soon disposed of; all were fond of the sport, but wild pigs and birds seemed to be the game most frequently bagged. The talk of women showed some of the problems that come to Noah for settling. Here is one of the stories he told us ·

"A few nights ago, the whole camp was roused by a shout of 'kamoi' (thief). Someone had been seen to jump into the river, and the excitement had started. A chase and search by torchlight brought no trace of the fugitive. All that I could do was to check off the men. At the elephant camp I found a footman, soaking wet on his mat. I stood the young Laos up, and put him through a grilling It was not loot that he had been after when he sneaked into another man's thatch. The unexpected return of a husband caused him to jump into the river."

In essentials, the little drama might have happened in the Occident, but another, which consisted of the selling of a well aged wife, and the buying of a fourteen-year old one for half the price,

could hardly have happened anywhere but in the Orient. The details were something like this:

A night watchman on Noah's ark—an old Chinaman from Swatow who was a reformed gang robber—discovered his wife receiving the attentions of a young mahout. To kill the offender would have been the custom sanctioned procedure, but the Swatow took the case to Noah, who settled it by making the mahout pay the injured husband eighty teals, and give a promise to keep the woman forever after. Don Juan was quite willing; he had formed a strong attachment for the woman. The eighty teals were credited to the old watchman's account in the ark's office. In a few days he appeared and asked for forty of them to buy a new wife with. His request was granted.

After tiffin next day we went by motor-boat to another camp. Noah had a Winchester rifle, and his gun, an English rifle, in which he used dum-dum bullets. He hoped to get a crocodile, or to wound one, and get it on his return next day. Noah declared that the crocodiles in that river came up twice each day; between ten and eleven in the morning, and between three and four in the afternoon. When hit, they sink immediately; small fish enter the wound and cause death. All this is most convenient for the hunter to know, but in spite of our care, we must have missed the crocodile's hours, for we did not get a shot.

We stopped at several villages on the way, in order that Noah might arrange with contractors

about labour. Late in the afternoon we reached our destination, a camp where the next important operations would take place. Two years before the trees had been girdled about three or four inches deep, and were now ready to be felled. There were no huts A few natives slept in the trees. Noah and I spent the night in the motor-boat.

The next morning Noah landed me in a village, half a day's ride from Tungson Ride, that is, in a two horse gharry I was out of the wilderness. At Tungson I caught my train again, and became an express passenger for Bangkok.

CHAPTER V

BANGKOK, THE CITY OF CONTRASTS

BANGKOK is a city of contrasts. That was my first impression, made while I stood on the western bank of the Menam, choosing from among the innumerable river craft a boat to carry me across to the main part of the city. Sampan, or swift, efficient motor boat? It is a symbol of the choice that arose with regard to almost every detail of life in the Siamese capital. A city of contrasts was the last impression made before I went on my way, reluctant to go in spite of my constant discomfort from the heat, and danger of disease bred by the miasma from the river and vile-smelling canals which intersect the city, for these things had been more than balanced by interest and pleasure. Contrasts, indeed. Old and new. Discomfort and delight And, before everything, Asia and Europe.

Nowhere in the world can one find the same odd mixture of the extremely Oriental and the European. Singapore gives the nearest approach, but Singapore is a world thoroughfare, whereas Bangkok is off the world's highway, and her contrasts are therefore the more vivid and the more significant. In the streets of the city—streets that

a short time ago, as the life of a city is measured—were elephant paths along the klongs, and which now are straight and paved and lined with modern buildings that brush shoulders with hovels—trolley cars compete with rickshaws and with gharries drawn by one horse, or a pair. The coolie who draws the rickshaw, panting under the strain of his human fare, or his load of pigs or poultry, pauses a moment to look after the huge gilt automobile that whizzes past him. It holds the king of this Oriental monarchy. He is an Oxford man. Mufti is his usual wear. Once, with shaved head, yellow robe and begging bowl, he took his turn at being a monk of Buddha, just as did the rickshaw man, and the driver of the gharry. And it is only a few minutes' ride in rickshaw, gharry or automobile to the place where one may do homage and feed hay to the white elephants that are still venerated in spite of the sad decline in glory the last fifty years has brought them Next to a palace of princely magnificence is a hovel not fit for a dog to live in. At the entrance of the new Chinese hotels with every modern equipment of convenience and luxury are eating stands where coolies enjoy amazing conglomerations of food. It is as though a hot dog stand were at the door of the Ritz. The fragrance of tropic flowers mingles with the unspeakable odours from the klongs. The gay chatter and laughter of the people, and the dismal croaking of giant-voiced frogs are heard always, everywhere On all sides rise the tapering, jewelled spires of

the Wats. It is a city to catch the eye, and ear and nose, and to compel the imagination. And its spirit is that of the Austrian capital in the old days. Bangkok is the Vienna of the Orient.

I caught my first glimpse of it from the Menam, the Mother of Waters It was early evening, and the lights were already lit when I left the long sheds which are the railway station and stepped into the sampan I had signalled. A near view proved my boatman to be a woman. She wore trousers, and her hair was bobbed; the usual garb of her class. She did not paddle; she chowed, to use the Bangkok phrase; that is, she faced the bow and her oar swiveled on a small upright fixed on the edge of the boat, as on the gondolas of Venice. The stench from the water, which I did not understand until I had seen by daylight the life and happenings there, at first distracted my attention from the busy life on the river. But as we made our way among the craft, I forgot the smell in the charm of the scene. There were boats of every type, gondolas, brigs, prahus, sampans, with here and there a motor-boat or small steamer, and rafts, floating houses and shops. Some of the boats carried Chinese lanterns of different colours. Those whose owners could not afford a lantern carried torches. The carnival feeling was increased by the animated talk and laughter that were exchanged as the boats passed each other. It was like being paddled through a country fair on water—a very gay country fair—on a warm summer night. Thus at my very

entrance into the city I discovered the festive natures of the people

We landed at a wharf in the centre of the city, and I entered the waiting automobile to be taken to the hotel recommended by the young Siamese I had met on the train. A valuable acquaintance he proved, for he acted as guide and friend throughout my stay in Bangkok, and introduced me to much of native life and custom I should otherwise have missed.

The streets were dazzling with electric brilliancy It was around theatre time, and they were full of life. All the city was out, enjoying itself after the heat of the day, and I began to realise the seven hundred thousand that is Bangkok's claim. The way to my hotel led through the main part of the city, on New Road for a time, then far out along one of the klongs, where the voices of the frogs were already lifted as if in swearing protest against the smell For four miles we spun along, too fast for more than a blurred impression of palace and hovel, colour and gaiety, tree-lined streets; then we stopped under the *porte cochère* of a marble palace, set in a park of beautiful trees and jungle plants. The smell of the klong and the voices of the frogs became of no consequence whatever. I had reached the Hôtel Royal, which was to be my home during my stay in Bangkok. This hotel is worth more than a mere mention, because its history and management are significant of the spirit of Bangkok.

The marble castle was not always an hotel It was built by a Siamese who had a double endowment of gambler's blood, since his father was Chinese. He operated and speculated in various products of his country; added greatly to his fortune, was intimate in court circles, and cut quite a figure in his time. But his time came suddenly to an end He exceeded his limit o` financial resources in backing his judgment on the future. Suicide followed bankruptcy.

The castle was one of his most valuable assets, and was taken over to satisfy a royal claim But royalty has more castles than it needs for living purposes; this one was given over to Madame Staro, a Neopolitan woman, to manage as an hotel as long as she lives. The rent is nominal, but at important court functions she does the catering; royalty and courtiers come as guests to the hotel. And that royalty is appreciative of good catering and expert hotel management is shown by the fact that Madame is not merely a royal lessee; she has been decorated by the king with the highest order in his gift, the Order of the White Elephant She is the only European woman who carries this high distinction.

This was my home in Bangkok. There I was to meet Siamese in many walks of life. There I was to continue an acquaintance with Prince Damrong, uncle of the king, and former prime minister —an acquaintance begun with a formal visit to the Prince's palace, and taken up again at the National

Library of which he has charge There, too, I was to be known as " Uncle " to everyone, a friendly stranger taken to the hearts of the gay, friendly Siamese. But I knew nothing at all of this that first evening. I knew only that it was very pleasant indeed to be welcomed by my Neopolitan hostess; to have my dinner in the open pavilion—Garden of Eden it seemed after my days on the train—preceded by a cocktail that my hostess called " un Américain," and to find that my palatial quarters on the second floor had a dozen windows, so arranged as to catch every breath that might stir. Next morning, early, I set out to get my first day light impressions of Bangkok.

For vehicle, I chose a one horse gharry. In it, and in other vehicles, on that day and on many others, alone or with companions, I rolled through the streets and along the klongs learning the fascinating city of contrasts.

Picturesque as is the river life, by daylight it seems less a carnival than at night. It wants the lanterns, for one thing; and, for another, the causes of the foul atmosphere are visible. The klongs are the sewers of Bangkok; they take the place of our closed drainage pipes. These canals, with the exception of two or three which have sluices as modern as any to be found in Europe or America, are navigable only twice in the twenty four hours. Between tides river craft of all description are embedded in the mud The occupants are for the most part families that have no home other than

their boats, unless perhaps a shack on a rice patch up the river. These families live and die on their boats, and between tides use the dry bed of the stream for every kind of refuse. All this does not prevent them from taking their bath as soon as the tide permits, for a daily bath is required by their religion.

"My people prefer to live on rafts and boats, because there they can get whatever fresh air there is," my Siamese friend told me. "Then, too, they are easily kept clean The bath is handy, and always ready. The people have no trouble in getting water for cooking and for other household uses" Obviously they have no fear of the muddy, yellow water, contaminated by the waste of the big city, water that would make a bacteriologist shudder I saw them plunge delightedly into it. Over the klongs are many beautiful bridges; gifts of the late king. He made a practice of presenting a bridge to his people on each of his birthdays.

Street scenes, and the streets themselves, are interesting and varied. New Road—that straightened, modernised, built-up elephant path, on which, worse luck, the elephants walk no more—lies along the river bank, and stretches from the king's palace on the north to the far end of the city. On it are the European department stores, and many business buildings, and there may be seen at its best the pageant of ox-cart and rickshaw and automobile, Siamese in panung, other Asiatics in native dress, the rare European, and the yellow-

robed monk, a constant reminder of the all prevailing religion.

From New Road branch many streets. Some are crooked and narrow, and lined with native bazaars; swarming with native life, all the business of which is carried on in the open. From it branch the Bhyadhai Road and the Rajadammeren Road (King's Walk), which have, I am convinced, no rivals in beauty in all the world. Overhung with the interlaced branches of the tamarind trees, the Rajadammeren Road leads to the hill from which rises the beautiful Wat Sa Ket. In this part of the city one finds all the splendour with which royalty surrounds itself the royal palace, with its white battlemented walls and gateways, the Queen Dowager's Palace, the Museum. Here too is a large park; it is graced with a monument of the late king, and has for background the Throne Hall.

Beyond the enclosure of the King's palace gardens, in a separate compound, is Zonanta Lai, a convent for young women of royal and noble blood, and for the daughters of high officials Having entered Zonanta Lai, all communication with the outside world ceases for these ladies, until they are sought in marriage. They are well guarded, for a wall ten feet high and two feet thick, surrounds the convent. Just within is a border of flame trees.

So much for a bird's eye glimpse of Bangkok. Mine whetted my appetite to learn as much as

possible about the place and the people I began to deliver my letters, make acquaintances wherever possible, and to prowl about the National Library to freshen up whatever knowledge I had had about Siam and to add to it.

In history I worked backwards. The ultra-modernness of the present king, Rama VI., of whom more later, is shown by the schools, the wireless connections, the electric transportation and lighting facilities of Bangkok, and the manner in which he puts away the traditional splendour of an Oriental monarch, and appears, on all possible occasions, in military uniform. This spirit of progress had its start under Rama's father, King Chulalongkorn I. When he came to the throne in 1868, Siam was in a state of semi barbarism. There were no roads, no avenues, no schools, of course no hospitals. New Road was then a little closer to the river bank than it is to-day; rafts and boats held the space now filled with wharves and docks, and were the forerunners of the dwellings, banks, and department stores which now line the street

Occidental influence has only made itself felt within the past fifty years, for it is only in that time that Siam's vast resources of teakwood and other valuable timber have been within the reach of Europeans. Even with Chulalongkorn's permission it was not easy sledding for the western exploiters of Siam's natural riches. Most of the land in the north belonged to the Laos, and had to be acquired from them by remuneration. Even

that did not insure against depiedation, for the tribes were wild and uncontrollable. Undeisized trees were girdled by the natives, who also carried on gueiilla waifare.

The old history, up indeed to the fourteenth century, is legendary, but so much at least can be gathered. The territory which now constitutes Siam was settled more than two thousand years ago, by the Thai, a tribe who lived in the centre of what is China to day. They were pushed by the Chinese to the south and west, until they reached the Bay of Bengal and the Gulf of Siam, occupying the whole of Indo China. The left wing of the Thai moved south and became the Siamese of to-day, or rather the foundation of the present Siamese, for there came about a great admixture of blood. War with surrounding tribes was a constant happening. The custom was for the conquering king to take with him part of the foe's population He established them in his country with gifts of grain, cattle, agricultural implements, and even money—an interesting scheme for colonisation, as well as the rehabilitation of a people after war; an idea modern nations might well consider The Siamese being most warlike and victorious gathered in tribe after tribe, with the result that it became a great empire. With the result, too, that a more mixed population cannot be found in the world, than in the Siam of to-day. There are the original Thai (which means free), Burmese, Laos, Schans, Kariengs, Camoodjans and a dozen other

tribes; a blending of blood that has produced the present Siamese. He is gay, free-spirited, alert. The bounty of his country makes thrift and energy unnecessary virtues.

Up to 1782, wave after wave of warring humanity swept the country, the last being the Burmese. But in 1782 a strong chief, Chakkri, took the reins; his descendants still rule Siam. Asia bothered no more; but there was Europe to be reckoned with. First, early in the sixteenth century, came the Portuguese; they were followed by the Dutch, French, and English, with the result that bit by bit Siam has been clipped. But in spite of France and England's generous helping of themselves, France taking the eastern part of Farther India and England the western part, Siam, with her twelve millions of people, is still a proud nation, and a rich one. Its king governs without a constitution, the only absolute monarchy left so governed except Afghanistan and Abyssinia The Siamese king governs through a cabinet composed solely of close relatives and intimates.

Mong Kut, grandfather of the present king, took the throne in 1851. He had, records state, eighty-one children. Though he belonged to the old school of Asiatic rulers, a new influence was already at work, for he brought from England two teachers —a man and a woman. He selected to be his successor the brightest of his sons, born of one of the princesses of royal blood. Very early Chulalongkorn put on the monk's robe, for when he was

thirteen he returned to public life. At this age, too, he was the father of a boy. In 1868 Mong Kut died, and the fifteen year old Chulalongkorn was crowned king. Evidences of his good works are to be seen everywhere Something of the more personal spirit of him, I got from his half brother, Prince Damrong.

" My master," the old prince called King Chulalongkorn, but with much love, and infinite pride. He dwelt on the king's unceasing labour—working himself and others unsparingly that had caused the incredible amount of progress made during the reign. The prince—his full name is Krom Luang Damrong served as Minister of the Interior and Prime Minister to Chulalongkorn

I met him first at his palace; it is an honour that I class in memory with my meeting with these other Oriental statesmen Li Hung Chang and Wu Ting Fong. The chairs and tables in the huge reception chamber gave it the appearance of a modern English room, but I knew that the greater part of the palace must be Siamese in arrangement and furnishing Prince Damrong was in Siamese dress: panung and white coat. It was a short audience, but we talked of the war. Just before I left he led me into an adjoining chamber.

" I want you to see my neutrality room," he said

On the wall hung autographed portraits of all the European rulers of his long day, together with many of princes and statesmen. In particular I remember a large picture of Queen Victoria, close

to one of Kaiser Wilhelm, and the German Empress. France was represented by Felix Faure, and Prussia by Prince Henry. There were Emanuel of Italy, and Constantine of Greece, and the late King Willem of Holland. He made no comment as we walked from picture to picture, but the trend of his thought was revealed when he suddenly said:

"And here is the most pathetic of all" He led me to a portrait of the last Tsar of all the Russias. On the corner was written, "From the battlefield, February, 1915." It was signed, "Nicholas."

I talked with him again in the garden of the Royal Hotel, where he came one evening with his grandnieces for the monthly dance which royalty often attends. Charming, modern Siamese girls were his nieces They had discarded the panung in favour of the European skirt. And I met the prince again in the National Library; of which he has charge, together with other educational affairs of the kingdom. There he showed me hundreds of wonderful bookcases; made of ebony and teakwood inlaid with gold. They had been brought from Wats throughout Siam, and had formerly been the repositories of holy manuscripts.

A most revolutionary person, so far as the traditions of his ancestors go, is King Rama, the sixth of the Chakkri dynasty and the son of Chulalongkorn. His European education is no doubt responsible. No prince can return from Cambridge and Oxford, as did Rama, and fit into the grooves

made by his Oriental forbears. In nothing is this so manifest as in the matter of marriage. Rama's father had many wives. His grandfather, Mong Kut, with a reputed harem of six hundred wives besides three thousand other palace ladies, makes Solomon seem a bit of an ascetic, yet the new king has reached his forties still unmarried. A betrothal, announced some time ago, was broken, and he is regarded as a confirmed bachelor.

His successor has not yet been named. Should, on Rama's death, the crown of Siam pass to the young prince, a half brother of the king, who has lately returned home from Harvard, perhaps even greater departures from tradition will mark court life in Bangkok. Perhaps it was the war-disturbed condition of Europe which brought this young prince to America, instead of to England. Perhaps it was some other reason. Be that as it may, there are at present twenty Siamese students in America, and by far the greater part of them are here for engineering courses.

About Rama, as I saw him in the street in his automobile, nor even at the rice planting ceremony, where I caught a glimpse of him, there was no hint of the pomp and pride and circumstance which are supposed to go with being a monarch in the colourful Orient. His military uniform, and his round, pleasant face with the humorous light in his eye, bear no regal suggestion. His closest friend, the power behind the throne, indeed, is Chow Phya Roma Rakop, a man of the people. Like his father, Rama

make gifts to his people. The Royal Sports Club, with race track, golf course and tennis court, in addition to a fine club house, is one of these gifts, but it is frequented more by Europeans than by Siamese. Just across the way, at no great distance, is the Royal Hospital, beautiful and modern and finely equipped.

I was up early and expectant on the May morning when the rice planting ceremony fell, for this is one of the picturesque old observances which has come down practically unchanged through the generations, and I wished to see all of it. It took place a mile outside of the city in a large field made gay and carnival like with flags and bunting. Though the ceremony must fall early in May, a little latitude is permitted, and the day had been chosen with great care by the priests, for it is a religious ceremony, and means much to the people. Had I been one of the priests in charge of selection, I should have waited for a day of less burning heat, for though it was early in the morning, the sun beat down mercilessly. This prevented me from drawing as near to the king's tent as I should have liked. As it was, I stood as near as possible without having to bare my head. It all began by the reading of the Sutras by priests of the highest rank. Then from the distance came the sound of fife and drum, and the procession began to arrive. It was headed by a squad of police in brown uniform, then came the band, dressed in shamrock green. They were followed, with just enough pause to produce a thrilling effect, by the stately Minister

of Agriculture, dressed in flowing purple robes and huge sugar loaf hat. White clad attendants came just behind leading two bulls draped in scarlet. A line of yellow clad monks came next, and the public at large, in gayest of gay-coloured panungs, brought up in the rear.

The bulls were blessed by the priests, and harnessed to a gilt plough. The Minister of Agriculture known for the day as "Rice King," ploughed three furrows, short ones, and seed was scattered in the furrows. It was, I believe, formerly the custom to have palace ladies scatter the seeds, but on this occasion, if my memory can be trusted, it was done by the Rice King himself.

A curious superstition obtains with regard to this ceremony. The people believe that if the panung of the Rice King slips, during the ploughing, so that it reaches below the calf of his leg, there will be insufficient rain for the rice crop. A stationary position means what crop experts in the United States call "ideal weather conditions." Imagine the breathlessness with which the onlookers watched the lower line of the distinguished plougher's panung—that undependable garment, for their very existence depends on the rice crop. In this respect the rice planting ceremony reminded me of days on the American Cotton and Produce Exchange when the crop as tabulated by the soothsayers in the Bureau of Agriculture in Washington is published. Both bulls and bears of the rice market must have been disappointed on the day I watched the ceremony,

for the panung moved slightly up and down as the Minister ploughed. No margin calls would have been necessary. A stand off, I judged it.

Ploughing and planting done, the bulls were turned loose, and left to graze. They, too, were watched by the soothsayers, for the manner of feeding plainly indicates to those versed in these matters, whether the yield will be big or small. So soon as the ceremony was over, the people scattered, to finish the day in festivity I looked about to fix the scene in memory. Curiously enough, with the people gone, there was a suggestion of Holland in the flat, flat country crossed by little dykes. It wanted only windmills to make the resemblance complete.

I wish I might have seen King Rama at his favourite diversion, acting. Everywhere one hears that dramatics are his greatest pleasure, but this is no departure from the traditions of the Siamese court. Nor, for the matter of that, from the traditions of many another court; many a royal head has put off crown to put on wig, many a royal face has been plastered with grease-paint, or whatever the make-up of the moment was, that its owner might play at being someone else. Certainly acting is in the blood of the Siamese monarch. In the old days, the plays were of gods, and spirits and heroes. Rama put on Shakespeare; but he plays other things as well, some of his own writing. In the royal palace is a theatre. Invitations to the plays are issued to members of the court, noblemen, and to distinguished citizens. Each pays an entrance fee ranging any-

where from ten to four hundred ticals, according to the amount of money needed for the charity to be benefited by that particular performance, Red Cross, or whatever. Sometimes boxes are auctioned for thousands of ticals. My royalist friend who has seen many of these performances, says that it is not usual for Rama to play the leading rôle. A most unusual monarch!

But though I did not see King Rama as an actor, I have the luck to possess a set of photographs, the gift of one of the palace ladies, showing scenes from several of the plays. Melodramatic things they look to be, and there is every evidence that the scenes are laid far from home. Military uniform and evening dress are the costuming of most of the men's parts, and the women are equally European.

The palace life of royalty, ministers and courtiers is Oriental in its spirit and customs. Wives, several of them, dwell under the same roof with concubines and dancers. The term palace ladies covers these two groups. There are, too, many slaves, legally freed, but still slaves since they have never taken their freedom They continue their protected existences with their former masters in a manner reminiscent of our old South. Quarrelling and intrigue are the diversions of these idle women.

All this is, of course, hearsay; no European is admitted into the intimate life of the courtiers. But the women are not kept in seclusion. The Siamese lady may move about with as much freedom as does the Western woman, but she seems to prefer life

within doors except for drives about the parks and to listen to the concerts given in front of the palace of the Ministry of War and the barracks. I often saw them there in their carriages in the late afternoon —small, vivacious women, very attractive with their straight, black, bobbed hair, which is never hidden by a hat.

Some were in European dress, but many cling to the native costume; wisely, since it is picturesque and becoming. They wear, as do all Siamese who can afford it, a different colour of panung for every day in the week. The seven day stretch thus becomes a chromatic calendar, in this order: Sunday, red, Monday, yellow; Tuesday, pink; Wednesday, green; Thursday, light green; Friday, blue; Saturday, mauve. I set down this custom for information, but am convinced that the idea of a widespread adoption of it would never find favour with Western husbands and fathers The panung is worn by both men and women. It is a piece of cloth, as costly as the wearer can afford, three yards long and one yard wide. It is wound about the waist and hangs over the hips; the ends are brought between the legs and tucked in at the back of the waist. A jacket and coloured shirt completes the costume for men. A piece of cloth pinned into a corset cover shape tops it for women. The effect is charming. Shoes and stockings in white or colours are now also worn by some of the women.

Formerly, the teeth of all Siamese women were stained black, and their tongues violet, by betel nut

A GAME OF CHANCE IN SIAM

ANOTHER "GAME OF CHANCE" — EXECUTION OF A CHILD

chewing. The custom still prevails, but in a lessening degree. I, indeed, had an initiation while paying, with my train-mate friend, a call in a bungalow off the Rajadammeren It must have been on Friday, for I remember that the panung from which our hostess pulled her golden betel outfit was blue The outfit was like two snuff boxes, one smaller than the other, joined together with chains. She rolled little pellets of the powdered areca nut into a piece of palm leaf, added to this some lime out of the smaller box, and hospitably shoved it into my mouth, far back between my jaws. Ornamental as were the boxes, charming as she was in the preparation, I did not retain the betel nut in my mouth long enough to contract the habit. If chewing must be done, let it be tobacco No doubt the hot, arid taste is agreeable to an habitué, but I was quite content to let my hostess do the chewing, while I lounged on the floor and played marbles, a favourite game in these Siamese bungalows. This aversion is, I believe, common to Europeans, for it is not so long ago that it was a certain scandal for a Siamese woman not to have blackened teeth; a certain tip to Mrs Grundy that the white-toothed beauty had come under the intimate influence of an Occidental But the new king has changed all that, as he has so much of national custom.

In Siam, thought of Buddhism is compelling, inescapable. I had been in Buddhist countries before, but never in one where the religion is so all-pervading, where there are so many outward and

visible signs. Wats are everywhere, with their beautiful, triple roofs, and their tapering, jewelled spires that rise above the surrounding buildings. The statistics of seven years ago give to Siam nearly seven thousand Buddhist temples, and a total of one hundred and seventy three thousand five hundred and sixty priests Then there are the monks, and every male Siamese is a monk at some period of his life. High and low, pauper and water-carrier and prince, each at some period shaves his head, puts on the yellow robe, and becomes one of Buddha's monks. The period of service varies with the individual. Some give six months or even less to the mendicant life of prayer and reflection. Others devote all their years to it. It was hard for me to realise that my train-mate friend had once gone about Bangkok with begging bowl, and enabled the other residents of the city to " make merit " for themselves by giving him alms Business man and sportsman, he is; progressive in all things and as good an example of Young Siam as one could find, and this period of service was, to him, a matter of course. Matter of course, too, to my young courtier acquaintance, relative of the king, and who will one day hold one of the important portfolios.

It seemed to me that this custom must make for an essential democracy of spirit; that a sweeper could never again stand in great awe of a prince after their yellow robes had brushed as they sat together in the tree-shaded courtyard of a Wat, eating from their begging bowls their only meal of the day. Some-

thing of this I said to my royalist friend, and he agreed that it must be true.

"And isn't it better," he said, in his perfect English, "isn't that life of prayer and reflection, and perfect equality better than the damned militarism into which we are plunged?"

No money is handled during this period of monastic service. In the early morning the monks go about the streets, holding out for a second only the begging bowl to whomsoever stands before them. If the opportunity to acquire merit by giving is not swiftly seized, the monk passes on. The monks never thank. It is the giver who has received the favour. At about eleven in the morning, the monks return to their monasteries After the only meal of the day, the simple routine, habitual but not compulsory, is for each to go to his cell, and spend the day in meditation and study until after sundown, when prayers are chanted.

Not that they are a sanctimonious lot. More than once I came on a group of them, just around the corner from a Wat, engaged in a sport that looked to me uncommonly like shooting craps. Nor do I think they would have been disconcerted or offended if I had followed my impulse to stop, produce dice, and initiate them into the good old darkey game. They, no more than I, would have felt that their while of play was seriously interfering with the life of prayer and reflection to which they are committed for the period of wearing the yellow robe.

Whenever it was possible I went into the Wats,

doing a stranger's homage at the shrine of the great Buddha. Images of him are everywhere, finger size, up to giant forms. I watched the faithful lighting wax tapers taken from the box in front of the shrines; watched them, too, placing flowers in the round vessel of sand which stands ready to receive them. I saw the offerings of gold leaf It is by the tiny bits brought by individual worshippers that the images are kept resplendent with gold. Of the many temples in Bangkok, most beautiful to me is the Wat Sa Ket. It stands on a hill at the end of the Rajadammeren Road. Its spires, jewelled with native sapphires, pierce through the bows of the overhanging tamarind trees Huge stone images stand guard on the imposing porches And from these porches I looked down on the city. Like a forest of palms and other tropic trees, with roofs peeping through here and there, seems the greater part of the city. The palaces stand out, and the spires of other Wats. Conspicuous, too, in their four or even six-story heights are the government and office buildings, and the department stores. And alongside the town, in majestic curve, flows the Menam, with its amazing river life. A wonderful place from which to overlook Bangkok, and fully sense its spirit, is the Wat Sa Ket.

As I stood before the magnificent temple, I was reminded by contrast of the temple in a rock that I had visited during my visit at the lumber camp down in the Peninsula. Tungson was the nearest town, but that means little, for we had ridden far to reach

the lumber camp; and far again to come to the forbidding spot where stood one of the oldest temples in all Buddha land. It is believed that well before the time of Prince Gautama holy people dwelt in the cave at the shrine.

It was still, too, except for the slow drip of water from the rock formations overhead. A giant Buddha, gilded with bits of gold leaf, was at the altar, and was overhung by a huge rock, which had the effect of a canopy It was a bewildering, awe-inspiring sight.

The priest received us kindly, permitted us to sit on a mat, and offered us tea and cigarettes These were passed to us by his boy helper. It would have brought contamination to have passed a gift directly from his hand to mine Also through his disciple, I handed him a Burmah cheroot. And so we sat and smoked, the hermit priest and I, and had a sort of companionship; silent, of course, for we had no common language. I wonder how long this ancient temple in the rock will remain as it is. Already it has attracted the attention of a European university, and much money has been offered for the privilege of making excavations. The offer was refused. But probably a special order will eventually be obtained from the Great Llama in Thibet, and archæological wealth will be unearthed. Since, recently, American engineers were summoned to make estimates on electric service in Lhassa, we may expect all things to be done in the spirit of progress.

Another famous temple, of which more later, is

the Pradjoo Paenum a floating temple at the mouth of the Menam. This is now deserted except for one great day in the year when the king and all his court come for a spectacular religious ceremonial.

To watch the working out of a religion in the lives of its adherents is a severe test to bring to any faith; but certainly the Buddhist does not fare badly when compared to the devotees of the other religions of the world. It is a mystical, beautiful philosophy, this of renunciation, and of the conquest of suffering by the annihilation of desire; it is not understood, perhaps not understandable by the Western mind. The decalogue, as translated from the Pali, hardly differs from that of the Mosaic law, and surely it is as conducive to straightforward living and right relations with one's kind.

> From the meanest insect up to man, thou shalt kill no animal whatsoever.
> Thou shalt not steal
> Thou shalt not violate the wife of another man, nor his concubine.
> Thou shalt speak no word that is false
> Thou shalt not drink wine, nor anything that may intoxicate
> Thou shalt avoid all anger, hatred, bitter language.
> Thou shalt not indulge in idle, vain talk.
> Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.
> Thou shalt not harbour envy, nor pride, nor revenge, nor malice, nor the desire of thy neighbour's death or misfortune
> Thou shalt not follow the doctrines of false gods

It is interesting to remember that Prince Damrong, in conversation with a Presbyterian missionary,

declared that since the world war, he had come to realise that the Buddhist faith was far more kindly than Christianity. And that the missionary had no answer.

Like every other newcomer to Bangkok, I was eager to see the white elephants in the royal stables; eager to match up the actual standing of these animals with the tales that come to the Western world. Everyone knows by now that white elephants are not white, but even though fortified with this knowledge, one expects something far lighter than one finds. Barnum played his part in raising false hopes, but Siam itself is not at fault. The word "pyu"—the Siamese adjective applied to these elephants means "grey," light, less dark; and the royal trumpeters are certainly "pyu" in comparison with the elephants that fix the type. Of the three treasured animals in the royal stables at the time of my visit, the one I best remember was a brick red, with pinkish spots here and there. Each had a separate stable; each stood on a dais; each was tied to a stalwart gilded upright that he might not follow an impulse to escape from his splendour, and, trumpeting, set forth to take the chances of the jungle. And so I found them on their daises, ponderous, patient but bored. They lifted their feet, and set them down again. They rocked from side to side. These are their sole diversions except that once a day they are led out to the river to bathe, and are led out again to be seen by visitors, when they

are of sufficient importance. I was permitted to feed hay to the venerated creatures, a distinction gained by paying one tical (about thirty-nine cents) to the keeper.

And all this reverence is because the white elephant is supposed to be animated by the spirit of some great king or hero, and the possession of one averts calamity and brings peace and prosperity to the people. According to Siamese faith, the soul of Buddha existed in the body of a white elephant before it was incarnated again in Prince Gautama But the veneration of the white elephant goes even further back, in ancient sun worship both the white elephant and the white horse were regarded as sun emblems. But times have changed The white horse has become a sign for road houses and a brand of whisky. The white elephant has disappeared from Siam's national flag, its worship has become nominal among the educated classes; something done merely in the memory of a tradition.

The jungle dweller who captures a white elephant is no longer elevated into the nobility. No longer is the daughter of the king given him in marriage. His sole reward now is a small sum of money In the old days word that a white elephant had been captured in the jungle brought great rejoicing in the capital. Great honours marked every mile of the journey from jungle to royal stables. He floated down the Menam in a wooden palace hung with crimson curtains, according to the old men's tales; tenderest grass and herbs and sugar cane were fed

to him, and his drink was perfumed with the jessamine flower The king and his court awaited in state the arrival of the white elephant.

But all this is now a memory. The last white elephant captured was put in a reinforced freight car in Ayuthia, and sent down to Bangkok. A crowd assembled at the freight shed to await his arrival, for the newspapers had advertised the event, and the gay Siamese seize every occasion to make holiday and carnival. But the king was not there to receive him; nor did he send the four white elephants which at that time constituted the royal stables The new elephant was conducted with some slight ceremony to the stable prepared; and there, that evening, the king visited him and conferred a title: Phra (count) Wa Hi Pa. But like many another of royal blood, Wa Hi Pa was born half a century too late to get the full benefit of the accident of royalty.

The decline in the white elephant's importance has taken place within the last fifty years. Formerly a king without a white elephant felt himself no king; the elephant was a guarantee against misfortune. But the ownership of one by a prince was by no means a piece of good luck; for the king made war on him to obtain possession This is the source of our commiseration of anyone who has a "white elephant on his hands."

But even though his estate is sadly fallen, the less dark elephant still has much prestige. Though not consulted about affairs of state, nothing that delights the elephant's palate is omitted from his

food. One sign of the ancient worship still exists—a pagoda near the stable where good spirits may enter into communication with the elephants. The death of one, which formerly caused profound and widespread sorrow, now passes almost unnoticed; the body is burned in a large field outside the town. It is probable that the royal stables are now maintained only out of regard for the superstitions of the people.

CHAPTER VI

BANGKOK DAYS AND NIGHTS

But it was not the Bangkok of royalty, and Wats and white elephants that gave me the keenest pleasure It was the Bangkok of my more intimate experiences; evenings passed with men in the clubs, coming to know their customs and their habits of thought; a day on the river with a picnic party; hours spent prowling about the streets seeing, hearing, experiencing. Though I set down these impressions in desultory manner, they give life as I lived it in Bangkok.

For example, I soon learned that the European who is friendly and understanding is made most welcome by the hospitable Siamese. I was fortunate enough to have many introductions to Europeans of power, but none of these helped me so much in the things I wished to see—the real life of the Siamese—as did the chance acquaintance I had made on the train. My friend, the embodiment of the spirit of young Siam was responsible for many illuminating experiences, and he introduced me at the public and private clubs to which he belonged. Many of the club members spoke at least one European language, and I was received at

once on a cordial footing. Dinners and entertainments were given in my honour, on a scale and with a liberty that convinced me that these young Siamese really mean it when they call their country the Land of the Free.

The first of these dinners stands out in my mind We met at the club in the early afternoon; no East nor West in this rule of the clubman, evidently. From there I was taken into two of the homes— just a look on the part of the father of the family to make sure that everything was well before the pleasure of the evening. I was disappointed at not meeting any of the wives; they do not use the liberty they have, and the domestic Siamese woman is, for the most part, too shy to meet Europeans But the children were not shy There seemed to be multitudes of them in both houses, gay, noisy little creatures, running about everywhere, and playing outside in the mud and puddles of water. The boys were naked. So, too, were the little girls except for a heart-shaped metal disc which hung from their hips by a loose cord. Slave girls looked on. Most households have a retinue of slaves, often relatives of the family, sometimes distantly related, sometimes as close as half brother or sister.

These visits were brief, and we returned to the club, where others had assembled. Though the wives all stayed at home, let it not be assumed that the dinner was without feminine representation. Even polygamy carries a fleet of the pirate craft of womankind. And, apropos, since that evening,

Cheaty" has been added to the Siamese ·ocabulary, for in our discussion of polygamy versus nonogamy, I admitted that while monogamy was he Western *ideal*, there were isolated cases wherein man had in addition to his lawfully wedded wife, sweetheart, and sometimes still another woman riend called, justly or unjustly, "Cheaty." They s frankly admitted that monogamy seemed to them much better marriage arrangement than theirs. Monogamy, that is, with licence. Polygamy is an xpensive institution, and they would gladly forgo t. It is a case of the almighty tical; just as lmighty as the dollar.

It was, therefore, a gay party of men and women hat assembled in the Room of the Moon the argest private dining room in the smart new Chinese restaurant. We men all wore the olourful Siamese dress; not the panung, but he long, wide silk trousers, coloured silk shirt nd white jacket. The women were dressed ccording to their nationality, which gave a *vide swing of costume, for there were Chinese,* Siamese, Malay, and Laos women among the guests eside the sing song girls, and dancers. The Siamese girls looked very childish with their bobbed traight hair; they were, in fact, very young Some had white teeth; some black from betel-nut hewing. The sing-song girls all Cantonese, of ourse, for these are the song birds of China—wore lack silk trousers and coat, with gold, silver, or hite embroidered bodice; costumes which set off,

and were set off by the brilliantly coloured raiment of the others. Their hair hung in long, black braids.

"Kin Kao Rue Yang," said each newcomer, and was greeted with the same words. I asked for an interpretation, and got it: "Has your stomach been well filled?" It seemed a strange phrase to be bandied about just before dinner, but I was told that it was the salutation of greeting at any hour of the day or night, that it merely took the place of our "How do you do?" Waiters flitted about, giving to each of us a hot, damp, perfumed towel; most welcome they were to me, for I cannot remember a moment during my stay in Bangkok when I was not dripping with perspiration. Tea was served. Some passed it by in favour of Scotch. Others reclined on couches, and enjoyed a whiff or two of opium which had been deftly rolled into pellets by the Cantonese girls, passed through a flame, and dropped into the pipes of the lotus-loving friends. Though the women all had cigarettes, I did not see any of them smoke opium. I fancy it is not done.

Above the hum of talk rose the shrill songs of the Cantonese girls, and the strains of the Khim, zither-like instruments which they played. But in spite of the gaiety of the entertainment and the beauty of the picture, as the evening wore along I became more and more uncomfortable. I was getting terribly hungry, and no food appeared; I began to see good reason for that national greeting, "Kin Kao Rue Yang." More tea; more wet

towels; more Scotch and opium cocktails It was not until ten o'clock that the first course of the dinner was served. But when it came, it was truly amazing. Here is the menu, given in the order of service:

Chicken kidneys.
Mushrooms
Shrimps.
Cheese
Shark's ears soup.
Fish.
Onions
Macaroni.
Chinese bird's nest soup
Duck.
Barley soup
A sweet fruit soup, made of the milk of cocoanut.

My friend confided to me that the dinner committee had sat up until all hours combining this menu for gourmets I can readily believe it. To read it through was stimulating to the imagination. To eat it, course by course, was an unforgettable experience. The solid food courses seemed only bridges across the klongs of soup. The scene was lively. We served ourselves from large bowls. Chopsticks were the only implements provided, but in spite of hard practice, I should have gone hungry from the festive board if someone had not come to my rescue with a spoon, for even when I had succeeded in hoisting some morsel, it was sure to collide with a more dexterous chopstick, and fall back into the bowl. Even with my spoon it was a

game of catch as catch can among a couple of cozen revellers

It was at another club meeting the monthly smoker of the Siano Chinese Co operative club in Bush Lane, to be exact that I learned what a wonderful thing Siamese dancing can be

Twenty of us sat around a big table The scene was far more suggestive of a directors' meeting than one of festivity, and a solemn air of expectancy prevailed. The Oriental takes the art of dancing far more seriously than do we, especially when he is paying well for professional talent. It goes hard with the performer who does not make good. The programme, arranged by an Arab impresario had been lengthened for my entertainment; besides a dance by a half caste Laos and French girl, and another by a Malay girl two Siamese Pavlovas had been engaged to do a historical dance of old Siam. They were very young, neither could have been more than fifteen. Their clothes were negligible, hardly enough of anything to make an impression

They floated into that directors' meeting to the music of a luptima played by a bent, grey old man. The instrument might have been made in a forest; it is merely half a dozen perforated reeds, joined with bands, and cemented at the joints with wax. In the rhythm of this primitive instrument the girls knelt before us, folded and lifted their hands, and bowed low.

With the swelling of the music they began to circle, to sway, and then to bend like young trees.

Their muscles quivered; they were alive from head to the tips of their beautiful, bare toes. I have no idea how long it lasted, but I know that every motion was poetry. Afterwards a Russian woman danced the dance of the Tartars. It fell flat. Everything paled before the series of pictures those Siamese girls had made I wondered what Isadora Duncan or Ruth St Denis would have said of it. To me, their efforts do not go beyond the rudiments of the art of dancing as it was revealed to me by those daughters of Thai. It was, however, the only Oriental dancing that has ever greatly appealed to me, except that seen several years ago in Java. That was in the Kraton of the Sultan of Djokjakarta, whose guest I was. This dancing was done by the Sierimpis ladies attached to the court, and, though blood relatives of their ruler, their existence depends on their interpretation of poems and stories through the art of dancing. But the Siamese girls did not suffer in comparison. As they floated from the room, still to the music of the Laotian flute, my friend said

"In the old days they would have worn gold embroidered robes, and carried gold and peacock fans. Their long, claw-like finger nails would have been gold-stained." But even so, they could not have been more beautiful, gold embroidered robes would not have enhanced their grace.

It is not merely in royal circles that the drama is loved. Rajah Wongse Road is the theatre street

of Bangkok; early in the evening and late at night it is thronged with playgoers. While in China and Japan, women's rôles are played by men, in Siam there are as many actresses as actors, and women often play boy's rôles. The Siamese do not care for plays of bloodshed, and there is no doubt but a problem play would have hard sledding among them. Cheerful topics they must have; gay performances that make them laugh.

In one play that I saw, with friends at hand to give the needed interpretation, the actors wore Siamese clothes, and the younger men had flowers stuck behind their ears, a picturesque custom one sometimes sees in the street, but only with a fop. Instead of the usual white jacket, the men each wore a coloured cloth thrown across the breast and shoulders. The women wore panung and shawl. Following the action as I would a movie, but helped somewhat by the intonation of the lines, the play impressed me as a farce, having a strong love interest.

My friends told me that the plot was indeed one of true love not running smoothly. It was not a matter of jealousy, nor caste, nor irate parents, nor insufficient funds on the part of the suitor. It was simply because of the time of birth of the two persons involved. Astrological objections to matrimony, in short. And the explanation given was illuminative of a Siamese belief.

The Siamese calendar is not reckoned in centuries, like ours, but by a large cycle of sixty

years, and a small cycle of twelve years. These twelve years have each an animal name and symbol. The first year of the twelve cycle is rat; second, cow; third, tiger; fourth, rabbit; fifth, big drake; sixth, small drake; seventh, cat, eighth, goat; ninth, monkey; tenth, rooster, eleventh, dog; and twelfth, pig.

It is important that a young man, wishing to marry, choose a girl born in the category of years that will safely supplement his own. For example, should he be of the cow year, he may marry a girl of the dog year, but not of the tiger. Nor would tiger and rabbit year go together, nor dog and monkey. I don't know why. I only was told that, according to the authorities, dire calamity results from such combinations. It follows, of course, that, after the perverse manner of lovers the world over, those born in the tiger year and those born in rabbit year are sure to think they can make a blissful success of life companionship. In the play that I saw, some such situation had arisen, and for a while things looked dark for the lovers Astrologers were consulted, and shocking results were predicted if the lovers remained true to each other, and, therefore, false to their stars. But just before the final curtain, something happened to change the astrologers' minds. It may be that enough money was slipped into their hands to bring new light in the reading of the omens. In any event, the lovers were permitted to marry, and take a sporting chance on living happy ever after.

Midnight finds Bangkok at its most wide awake. Movie houses and theatres have emptied their crowds into the streets. Ice cream and soda shops are filled. Food, cooked and uncooked, is snatched from street stands. There is much tooting of auto horns, much scurrying of rickshaws and gharries to save themselves. The Rajah Wongse Road is as busy after the show as any theatre street in the Western world.

We had, at the start, no intention of making a slumming party of it. My friend and I, after leaving the theatre, tarried at an open-air kitchen on the sidewalk to discover, if possible, why it should be attracting the attention of so many people in smart machines The reason was not far to seek A special supper dish was being handed out to the Sais sent by their masters. This dish proved to be a rice stew, with egg, onion, oysters, pork, green peppers and sauce Siamois —a combination Oscar might well substitute now and then for his crabmeat Louis, or Golden Buck Besides being good, it makes one thirsty, so we continued our stroll to Jawarad Road, and into the Pak Chan Low, an airy palm garden restaurant. From there we went to the Bowery of Bangkok, where my friend seemed to be well known. He and the fellow that the New York politician would call the district leader of that section belong to the same secret society. In order to call on the Bangkok Big Tim Sullivan we went to his five story frame building that towers above the neighbouring shacks.

As distinguished guests we were invited to the top floor where the boss was in session with some of his henchmen. They looked the part. The boss himself was a Chinaman, with a head as smooth as a billiard ball. He was bare to the waist, and wore only blue cotton trousers He, showed us proudly over his building rooming and eating house, gambling and opium joint it proved to be, and I left the place under the escort of two of his henchmen. The boss had ordered them to take me for a Look See.

As we walked through the narrow, vile smelling alleys, I did not enjoy being so tightly sandwiched in between my rough neck escorts, but when they explained that, so walking, there was less chance of my being stabbed in the back, I hugged them tight. One likes to reduce to a minimum chances like that. But, bad as was the district we entered, I know of places in the Western world where the same kind of protection would be just as convenient. Vice is cut after much the same pattern the world over. It was more than sufficient to get a glimpse into the hovels along the river banks, and on the rafts, hiding places for vice of every vileness; crime of every enormity disgusting, appalling unnatural.

We stumbled over filthy, slippery boards. Because of the darkness I never knew whether I was ashore or on a raft in the water. We stopped at shanties here and there, and in some of them saw the familiar sights of opium smoking; the addicts lay in a happy stupor, forgetting their terrible world.

In other shanties a home-made drug had been used; the consumer was aggressive, talkative, lively as though he owned the earth and all the white elephants in it

My huskies eventually pushed me into a sampan I was glad that my confidence in their boss outweighed my misgivings at being alone with them on the Menam The pitchy darkness was only broken now and then by a flickering oil lamp in some boat we passed. We had paddled about a mile downstream before we boarded a raft, on which a square, wooden house was built This house proved to be a theatre of the underworld By the light of a kerosene lamp, we bought tickets at twenty satangs each (eight cents United States money). Smoke obscured the view as I entered, but when my eyes grew accustomed, I thought I must have strayed by mistake into a public bath. I seemed to be surrounded by naked arms and legs, naked shoulders, naked bosoms, much jewellery and a few gay shawls.

There was a stage, probably twelve by twenty feet, covered with a Brussels carpet. Whatever colour it had once had was quite lost in dirt. At the edge of the carpet sat the orchestra--two boys that made a terrific noise by picking instruments that resembled banjos. A dozen players, men and women, were on the stage, but I did not linger long enough to find out what the play was about. The noise, smoke, and generally hideous atmosphere stifled any desire to extend my studies in the dramatic art among the

cut-throat fraternity of Siam. I only wanted to get out of the hellish place; wanted, too, to get away from my guides. I did not feel any too comfortable about them. I had a feeling that they might come up at no distant day for one of those executions that I had heard about, executions that are practically open to the public, and in which the executioner dances in front of his victim before he swings the sword. There is, I heard, always betting among the spectators whether the head will be severed at one blow or two. The executioner gets an extra fee of ten ticals if he does the work with one swing of his sword. But my fear for my guides was quite without grounds. They belonged, I afterwards learned, to a high Chinese society, all powerful. So powerful that an occasional corpse or headless trunk discovered in the Menam would never be traced to them.

They were very careful of me, conducting me far past their boss's five story headquarters, and so near to the Wongse Road, that I might there hail a gharry, and drive to my hotel in comfort and safety.

The pawnshops of Bangkok held me for many an hour. They are incredibly numerous; incredible, that is, until one traces their connection with gambling—the dearest vice of the Siamese Sandwiched among the open bazaars in the alleys that branch from the Sampeng—the shopping street they are kept by Burmese and Chinese. The Siamese are the pawners; never the brokers. They

are too gay in spirit; glide too easily between the rock of life to succeed in this business which is essentially one of thrift.

On the shelves and counters of these pawnshops lie jewellery, old crowns, weapons, embroideries—rare old bits that might find a place in great museums. All are covered with dust. Often while I stood turning them over, a coolie would bring in a panung, and borrow on it a satang or two, that he might try his luck again.

My chief haunt had no counter. The wares included much second-hand clothing, and what was not hung on the walls was stacked on floor and boxes, forming a nondescript mass to be poked with one's cane in an attempt to stir up something worth while. The Burmese proprietor kept watch from the rear of the store, where he and his family ate and slept. A gold betel-nut outfit was the best find I made in the stock, until the day that I came on an old parchment manuscript. I pounced on it, sure that at last I had come on a treasure.

Folded accordion fashion as it was when I found it, the manuscript made a book about fourteen inches long, three inches wide, and two thick. But when shaken out it was a generous six yards long, both sides of the parchment were covered with characters that resembled those of Sanskrit, carefully drawn in ink. There were illustrations, too; a dozen drawings of huge men, with helmets and weapons. Some of them crouched, and seemed about to spring. Their arms—of which some had

as many as six—were flexed to strike hard They were indeed formidable.

The shopkeeper was little help to me. If he had ever known anything about the book, he had forgotten, for it had probably been there for years, hidden at the bottom of the pile. He shrugged, and said something about healing.

It seemed a wild guess. Mythology, undoubtedly. Tales of gods and heroes. An ancient epic, perhaps, relating the prowess of some Oriental Hercules. I carried away my treasure, and for months let my imagination revel. Finally I showed the book to a Siamese friend. whose education included the old language in which it was written

"It is a mixture of Sanskrit and Burmese," he said. "These characters have not been used in Siam for at least a hundred years. The book may be much, much older. I must work at it a while, and then I will tell you about it"

Here is the something that he told me "I translate from the beginning," he said.

"A miraculous physician who was an expert in anatomy and physiology divided the movement of the world into twelve atmospheres. When the globe turns into a certain kind of atmosphere, certain kinds of sickness are prevalent. The virulence varies according to what time, in what place, in what atmosphere, and in what weather and climate."

Then the pawnbroker had been right. Disappointed, I waited for my friend to go on.

"The physician began with the fifth atmosphere, which falls in April or 'Mesrasri' of hot weather. Besides many other kinds of skin diseases and other maladies, he mentioned that during that period a certain type of boil will come to master the atmosphere, the sun and the moon. The most virulent is called fire cancer. It will be more dangerous for men if it appears on the right side of the body, and for women on the left side. The pictures show the character and place of the diseases." He put his finger on a group of little dots. "By these he shows where the sickness enters the body. . The physician used the giant picture because he considered that such diseases were very dangerous and virulent, as is the notoriety of the giant."

Not gods. Not heroes. Just sicknesses that twisted one into hard knots as might a giant. And could finish one's career as quickly as might a giant, it appears as my translator went on:

"He gives now the treatment for the fifth atmosphere. If flaming cancer runs across the back, it is fatal . . . how do you say it? . . . right away. If it is at the calf of the leg, it is fatal in seven days."

And no help for it; none whatever?

"Oh, yes; there is treatment. These herbs; he gives the names, but you would not know them for they are Siamese. If you bind them on, maybe it is cured.

"Then there is the seventh atmosphere. The

sun moves to the rainy and growing atmosphere, and the world is rich in provisions. The people often take excessive nourishment in fruit and fish, which causes internal and external trouble, and disease. During this period there are four important kinds of boil and quick cancer. Besides these four main kinds, there are eight other types. . . ."

"But wait," I said. "Surely there is something different, something besides cancers that are fatal in four days." I could not be sure which atmosphere we were approaching, and did not want to know too much about the probable health conditions of the near future.

"Oh, much else," my friend said He turned the pages slowly, and picked out a word here and there Here he was not so fluent, for he had not worked over these pages.

"There is the disease when you cough all the time. Yes, consumption. And when you are yellow, and tired. Malaria And what do you call it when it looks like you are going crazy?"

"Delirium," I suggested

"Not that. Just you cannot sit still. Walk around. Move all the time."

"Nervous disorder?"

He nodded. "Then there is something that goes up and down in your throat. Little strange noises"

There was nothing to guess but hiccoughs, and he accepted it tentatively. "It is a funny word Maybe. And then there is when you cannot breathe."

With asthma, I had him leave off. He would come to gout in a minute, I was sure of it. I had lost interest. Whenever the book was written they had been grappling with the same physical woes that we are having, and the diseases are dangerous still; "as virulent as is the notoriety of the giant."

It was seven o'clock one Sunday morning when we put out into the river to go picnicking. Our destination was Pradjoo Paknam, at the mouth of the Menam, where it flows into the Gulf of Siam. My friends were taking me there to see the Floating Temple, which is deserted throughout the year, except for the one great day, when the king and all his court come, and religious ceremonies that have come down through the ages are held in all their splendour. But this day of ours was not that great day. We were to see the temple in its deserted state.

In our launch, as it cast off from the Cold Storage anchorage—which is to Bangkok about what Times Square is to New York so far as position is concerned—was a group curiously assorted as to racial strains; a group that would be hard to assemble anywhere but in this city of strangely mixed blood. For example, there was our host, whose far Portuguese ancestry came by way of Madeira and Macao through the China Sea to Siam, where the Portuguese-Chinese-Siamese strain was mixed and strengthened with English blood. The family of his "mucha adorata," also members

of the party, came from Southern India, where at Trichinopoly a romance took place between a Brahmin and a lady of Czechoslovakia. Another family with us had a simpler family tree. The father was plain Scotch, the mother pure Siamese Then there was a gentleman from Madras, so learned that besides his medical and surgical skill he could speak every language and dialect of India and Further India That is a very large order indeed. There were in all about two dozen of us.

We had stocked up with plenty of ice and provisions at the Cold Storage plant, which lies on one of the busiest of the klongs. I was excited about my first trip on Siam's great river, highway, sewer and water supply all combined in one, but it took us some time to get from klong to river, for the klong was alive with craft of all kinds. There were coal barges, motor launches, rice boats, market boats freighted with poultry, fruit, vegetables, betel nut, cocoa, brick and cement; other pleasure launches like our own; sampans whose clever pilots were selling fans and eye-glasses to people in other boats. Some pilots, still more enterprising, sold soup, and other cooked food, ladling out big bowls to the pleasure seeker who had stayed in bed so late he had missed his breakfast.

Out in the river the scene was repeated, but on a larger scale. There were old-fashioned Chinese junks, paddy boats being towed down to the rice fields, rafts of teak, and Mai Kiam, and Takien,

sampans with palm leaves for sails, and the most up-to-date of motor-boats. Along the wharves we passed the palatial offices of the European traders, banks, the all-powerful Bombay-Burmah Company, and the East Asiatic Company. We passed ocean-going steamers, and a multitude of swift traffic police launches without which there would be chaos on this great nautical boulevard, and finally reached the quarantine station where the traffic thinned and the river widened. The last business structure that we saw was the Standard Oil Depot, peeping out from under a cluster of betel-nut trees. This is probably the most picturesque station that great company has.

And so we left the city behind us. Afterwards, there was only an occasional house built on stilts in the water. We passed breadfruit trees, cocoanut and banana groves, Nipa palms, jack fruit, some betel-nut and pineapple trees, paddy fields—a continual stretch of vegetation broken now and then by a klong which led into one of Menam's many tributaries farther up country; gateways, they are, to the teak and other rich lumber regions. Led, too, to the rich districts where the hidden treasures of tin, gold, and other metals lie. With all this evidence of the resources of Siam before my eyes, I realised with new force the truth of Prince Damrong's answer to a question of mine about the apparent laziness of the Siamese.

"The great misfortune of my people," he said, "is the bounty of the country. They have no

struggle for existence, and, therefore, become idlers. Life is too easy for the Siamese"

This, of course, is the reason why the work of the country is done by the Chinese, in whose home land famine is never further away than just around the corner. The people must work or starve; industry and thrift are in their racial heritage. In all my wanderings in the Orient I have never seen a Chinaman who was not engaged on some sort of a job.

Down the river our motor-boat ploughed, and not long before we came to the temple, it pulled up at a pretty, Nipa thatched house on stilts. Fish nets hung in front of it. From back of the house, and underneath where there was a bit of mud, chickens, turkeys, pigs, cats, and dogs came running. They cackled, squealed, and barked; it was a noisy reception, and whether of welcome or protest was an open question. The house belonged to our host, though he denied ownership of the animals. His caretaker had, he said, started a poultry farm. The outside of the place was in startling and amusing contrast with the interior, with its luxurious furnishings, black panther skins, and silk hanging. It had, on the whole, the appearance of a *nid d'amour*. Apparently our sole reason for stopping there was that I might be introduced to "Lawrong," called "Shamshew" in English, which is a forbidden fruit for Americans. It is made of rice and the juice of mango, and is potent stuff.

We did not tarry long, but shot on down the river to the floating temple, surrounded by beautiful gardens. On the marble floors of the wide porch of the Wat, the female members of our party spread a luncheon. There was, I remember, home-made curry, and the fish caught while the men of the party were visiting the poultry farm. It was cooked deliciously, and seasoned with herbs gathered in the thicket about the Wat.

I had started to help the children gather the herbs, but fled to the marble floor when I stepped on a snake. "Harmless," the others laughed, but how was I, a stranger in Siam, to know which of their snakes meant business? I preferred to retire into the temple with my host, who had improvised there a fair copy of an American bar of the old days. (He once was in the navy.) If the temple ever floated, it did that day, for though the Scotsman had lived forty years in Bangkok, he retained his Edinburgh thirst. Our host, his prospective father-in-law, and the Madras gentleman all did the best they could The bats, owls, lizards, and frogs soon left their hiding places behind the pillars. We ended the day with a dance in the broad, cool porches. The children played ball, using a dried-up fruit of a tree called "Tinpet." It makes as good a tennis ball as one could wish. They showed me, too, a wonderful toy made by twisting the bark of a certain palm tree. Even playthings for the children are thus provided by bounteous nature in Siam.

Well before dark we were on our return way. I was still to see a market on the western bank of the river—a market which furnishes Bangkok with fish, vegetables, and fruit, including the far-famed, vile-smelling durian. On first acquaintance, which I had made long since, it seems impossible that one could ever get near enough to the durian to eat it, but a lady of our party prepared it with rice and some spices in such a way that the unspeakable smell was knocked out, without, they told me, robbing the fruit of its prized medical properties. Moreover, so prepared, the durian is delicious.

Just before sunset we passed the well-anchored "Phra Ruxang," the *Pride of Siam*. She is an old British destroyer, which the English kindly let the Siamese have for two million ticals. She was taken over with great ceremony by the Siamese navy. The king blessed her, by which act she was supposed to be rendered invincible and invulnerable. She has never been proved to be otherwise, never having left her moorings since that great ceremonial day. In spite of repeated efforts, the Siamese have never been able to get her under way. Bangkok rather enjoys the joke.

But the *Pride of Siam* was not the boat which made the lasting picture in my mind. That was made by another craft, which, as we shot past it in our crossing to the east side of the river, seemed a symbol of the colour and the spirit of Siam. It was a boat with palm leaf sails, a moving spot of yellow on the muddy Menam, for it was filled with a priest

and twelve monks. Their robes were the yellower for the sunset light.

There is a night that is memorable to me, because I passed it out of doors, lost in the city of Bangkok.

It began with a supper party. I had taken some men to a little restaurant where the *pièce de résistance* is claret duck. It is just that, for the duck is cooked in claret, and stuffed with Nam Pan Mow, which are bamboo shoots.

The only tiger I saw in Siam was in that restaurant, and he was clay. He showed the wear and tear of a long life, and looked the more battered because a few nights before a guest, after much indulgence in claret duck and accompanying beverages, had staged a tiger hunt. The Russian landlady—that is, she had come to Bangkok twenty years before, and had travelled from Russia by way of South America—was all for removing the bullet-riddled trophy. But I persuaded her to leave it, that we might not forget what tigers looked like. There are black panthers in Siam, but no tigers.

After supper we went our several ways. I had begun to feel so much at home that I forgot I did not speak the language, and might need a companion to interpret for me. I hopped into a gharry, shouted to the sleepy driver, "Loyall," which is the generally accepted Siamese for the Hôtel Royal. But this particular driver failed to get it. In accordance with the etiquette of all gharry, rickshaw and other vehicle drivers in the Orient, he asked

never a question, but dashed off madly. I dropped off to sleep. It had been a strenuous day. Fortunately the sleep refreshed me, for when I awoke I needed all my wits. I found myself in unknown territory. Swamps were all about me. Horse and driver had followed the passenger's example, and were sound asleep.

I shouted at the top of my lungs. There was no answer. The horse flopped his ears but the driver slept on. There was no hope of getting advice from anyone else, for there were no houses near, and besides, any lingo at my command would not have been understood. Any language other than Siamese, Chinese or Malay is useless except in the European business section.

A heavy malodorous mist enveloped the swamp. I knew that it bred disease; that every moment passed there was perilous. From all directions came the weird noise made by Bangkok's millions of frogs. Giant voiced frogs, they are; theirs is not the cheery, lusty concert of the occidental frog, but a horrible basso profundo chorus, such as might come from the Styx, with Cerberus howling in the distance. It was no use shaking the driver awake, for if he had not understood "Loyall" at midnight, there was small chance of him understanding it at three in the morning. I prowled about in the darkness trying to discover the direction back to town, and finally decided to make the best of a bad job. I resumed my sleep until dawn

Sunlight brought Colonel Forty, Bangkok's chief

of police, out for his morning canter. My experiences with that fine man have induced in me the belief that all chiefs of police should, like him, hail from the Isle of Guernsey. He gave the needed directions to my gharry driver, and steered me home. Bangkok, in the early morning, is unforgettable.

As we passed through the narrow streets, I saw the yellow-robed monks with their begging bowls moving noiselessly from door to door. I saw them receive alms without asking, and without thanks The giver had received the favour; in giving he had "made merit" for himself. At that moment, in the usual mood of the "morning after," I very much wanted to "make merit for myself." I wanted to do something for Buddha. I tried to attract the attention of one after another of the passing monks. Though several must have seen me, none turned from his way. At last I stopped my gharry, got out, ran after a monk and, catching him by his robe, dropped my coins into his begging bowl I had no way of knowing whether it was a water-carrier or a prince who had received my alms.

Nor was it only the monks who were abroad. Servants were marketing. Worshippers came and went through the gates and doors of the Wats. The doors of business houses stood open, early though it was, for all the work of the day must be done before eleven o'clock. From then until three the streets are deserted; the sun's rays are like fiery spears, and rich and poor seek shelter within doors. In words that he did not understand, I encouraged

my driver to go faster, for I longed for the comfort of the Hôtel Royal. When, late that afternoon, the breeze blew over the city and Bangkok reawakened, I, too, came awake

During exile, one observes one's nation's holidays with a fidelity undreamed of when at home. Ten o'clock of the morning of 30th May, 1921, found a group of Americans assembled at the residence of the United States Minister to Siam. We waited in the cool, tree-shaded veranda until the party was complete.

There were, as I remember, three automobiles besides mine. All the Americans at the Embassy turned out, of course, together with the native secretaries. Then there were representatives of the three newspapers printed in English, and finally two New England ladies, tourists, who took this day from their sight-seeing to be with us.

We must, I am sure, have presented a ludicrous aspect in spite of our reverent purpose. We were so oddly assorted as to clothes. I wore the whites of the tropics; comfortable, and it seemed to me not inappropriate, since white is the mourning wear of China and some of the other Orientals. Whites were also worn by the Chinese Marshal who rode with me, he is in charge of the native secretarial affairs at the embassy. But the United States minister stood true to his national traditions. Tropic heat counted for nothing; he treated it with sublime indifference, and dressed himself like an

American gentleman going to a funeral—black trousers, black frock coat, high silk hat—the whole dreary outfit. One of the newspaper boys, in gallant emulation of this correctness, had evidently gone through his trunk for garments that would be suitable to the occasion, and had dug up grey trousers, a short, tight fitting black coat, a collar that reached his ears, and an opera hat. The rickshaw drivers of Bangkok are accustomed to strange sights, but even they looked twice at us as we drove through the streets. The minister, true to tradition, though it meant probable sunstroke, rode with uncovered head.

It was not a long drive to the cemetery. At the gate we got out of our machines and went in to walk along the paths, and to put flowers on the graves of such of our countrymen as had come to their long rest in far Siam. There were not many—a few missionaries of the old days; a few travellers and business people who had succumbed to cholera; a few sailors. Especially to an inveterate rover, there is something profoundly moving in the sight of a grave of one who has died far from his home country. These lonely resting-places touched me deeply, and I was very glad to have taken my part in this small ceremony of remembrance.

This tribute over, we drove back to the green space in the city, where stands the white shaft erected in memory of the Siamese who fell in the world war. Some, with humorous intent, declare

that the monument is literally to *the* Siamese who fell; that there was only one of him. Be that as it may, Siam certainly equipped regiments of little yellow-skinned soldiers who marched away in June, 1918, to bear a hand in the terrible struggle. And every man of them who returned came back limping European shoes can be as crippling as European bullets to feet that have always been free and bare.

At this monument, Siam met America, and did the honours of the country. We were received by a representative of the Minister of War, and by the Commander of the Siamese army, who made up for his lack of height with dignity and resplendent uniform. Every inch a man and soldier was that five foot, yellow general.

The ceremony of welcome was graciously brief, hardly more than a general bowing, and a few words of greeting; then we were led to a nearby awning under which a table was loaded with refreshments. There were cigars and cigarettes; the whisky which every nation in the world believes the American must have for his pleasure, and lemonade in eight different colours. We others partook of everything, but the Boston ladies confined themselves to the chromatic lemonade.

Every circumstance of this hospitality is characteristic of the Siamese. Any occasion serves as an excuse for festivity. A dignified courtesy to Europeans is always shown by the educated Siamese, and nowadays it is given with a manner almost studied, as though to convey the constant

assurance that while Europeans are welcome, the Siamese are masters of their own situation, and fully intend to remain so.

It sets one thinking of how different is their case from that of their neighbours across the Bay of Bengal. Notwithstanding the clippings and encroachments on their territory, the Siamese have never been made the dominion of a European power. The contribution of their mite toward winning the war was voluntary. During my stay, rumours of the British power tottering in India flew thick and fast. Having fought side by side with their masters, the natives claim independence as their share of victory. Since the world war, the spirit of nationalism has triumphed everywhere over religious beliefs and differences, even in India where at last Brahmins and Mussulmans are combining to stand against their overlords. It is in the cards that eventually India will become a dominion within the British Empire, with privileges of self-government, similar to those of Canada, Australia and Ireland.

And the spirit of nationalism, always keen in Siam, the Land of the Free, was never more alive than it is to-day.

I could not say good-bye to Siam until I had visited Ayuthia, only a few hours by rail or river from Bangkok. Just as Bangkok is the most vivid expression of the present Kingdom of the Free, Ayuthia, the old capital, is a memorial of the Siam that was one of the greatest Oriental empires of its

day. Ruins are there, relics of old days when the Thai fought the neighbouring tribes, and armies came from afar to conquer. And it goes without saying that most of my friends in Bangkok had never made a point of visiting these ruins, any more than we run over to Philadelphia from New York to look up Independence Hall.

Though Ayuthia, because of its strategic position, must have been the capital city from the beginning of Siamese happenings, history up to the fourteenth century is legendary. The period of greatest splendour was under King Golden Cradle, so named because of the gift made to his parents at his birth by a Cambodjan vassal king. This was about the middle of the fourteenth century, when the lands and people subjugated by the Thai stretched throughout the whole Malay Peninsula, as far south as Malacca Thirty-four kings held sway between 1344 and 1767, and there was no century in that time when the ground was not soaked with blood. Kings of neighbouring tribes would force war on some slight pretext; if nothing better offered, they would demand a tribute of white elephants, sure that it would be denied, since they were held sacred in Siam.

And in those days war was a splendid pageant There is a record that, in the year 1547, an army of fifteen thousand cavalry, nine hundred thousand infantry, and seven thousand war elephants stood at Menam crossing before Ayuthia. The army had been sent by the King of Pegu, whose demand for

two of the seven white elephants owned by Phra Tschao, King of Siam, together with two palace ladies thrown in for good measure, had been unconditionally refused by the Siamese King

Another colourful bit of Siamese history hangs on Phra Naret, the black prince, who, in 1557, was called out of the monastery, which was a safe retreat for royalty in those dangerous days. Lucky in war, he brought vengeance on former invaders, including the Cambodjans, and fulfilled his vow of not resting until he had bathed his feet in the blood of the Cambodjan king who had betrayed him. This king was succeeded by his brother whose peace-loving nature did not prevent him from poisoning the heir-apparent to the throne, and himself being stabbed to death. "Les couronnes d'Asie sont toutes mal assurées" was the illuminating comment of the French ambassador, La Loubère to Louis XIV.

The Burmese took Ayuthia in April, 1767. The next year a Chinese half-breed, Phaja Tak, gathered the remnant of Siamese forces, ousted the enemy, and declared himself king. This was the beginning of the end of Ayuthia's great days, for he established himself at Bangkok. His fourteen year reign ended in madness. Trouble broke out. General Chakkri, commander of all the military forces in Siam, returned to Bangkok from Cambodja where he was fighting, subdued the rebels, and captured the throne. Thus was founded the present dynasty, on 14th June, 1782

And of all this there is no tangible reminder

except ruins of old palaces, a gigantic Buddha, and huge crumbling walls. These Ayuthia ruins stand in deserted jungle lands, instead of crowding close on built-up areas and new cities, as do most historic ruins. As I tramped over the debris, which is all that is left of a city where once lived many hundreds of thousands, I was possessed by an overwhelming realisation of the destructibility of all things, and the inevitable passing

There is, of course, a new Ayuthia, and this I visited first. It is a city of probably thirty thousand. There are no palaces, no streets, no sidewalks, no roads, no elephants, no rickshaws, no horses. A city built on rafts and boats securely anchored in the Mother of Waters takes the place of the old capital of a great empire. The pol ce station is the only house actually built on land. As one looks over the surrounding plains and jungle lands, one wonders why the Menam was chosen as the building site for the new city. Perhaps because the Ayuthia of old was razed by fire. Or perhaps because every summer the Menam floods the adjacent land, and a city built upon a river can rise and fall with the waters instead of being destroyed.

The Menam serves many purposes to these boat and raft dwellers. Refuse is borne swiftly away. Washing of clothes and body is done in it And it brings food to the very doors of the inhabitants of Ayuthia, who catch their fish without stirring from home. Most own a little patch of shore land, whereon to raise rice and fruit and vegetables.

All the business of the city is transacted on the water in boats and on rafts It is an engrossing spectacle. The boat which held our party glided through this traffic ; we were on our way to the boat (dwelling and shop combined) of a druggist, a friend of one of the party. We found his store moored at the end of a water lane. (Even here, it seems, corners are a favourite location for drug stores.) His place was typical of all the river dwellings. There were no rooms; mats were provided for sleeping, and most of the routine of life takes place on boards stretched out in front of the boat or raft. It was on such a board platform that we squatted to eat our luncheon of rice and vegetables and fruit, prepared by the women of the druggist's household. It is a rare, rare event for a European to be so entertained.

And from this platform we had a splendid view of the floating shopping district of Ayuthia. The river was alive with boats of both the buyers and sellers of merchandise and produce. My attention was caught by a display of feather fans I hailed the store; it floated up to me, and I made my selection without moving from my comfortable spot. I also acquired a hat, peculiar to Ayuthia, which serves as sunshade. It is a braided straw affair, which flares like a lamp shade, and, also like a lamp shade, rests on a frame which fits over the head. It is an ideal device for the hot climate; it gives excellent shade, and barely touches the head.

As we said good-bye to our host and took to our

THE BROADWAY OF AYUTHIA

boat again we all but collided with a raft-load of prisoners. They were heavily chained, lest they jump off and hide under the houses in the water, as has frequently happened. It is only of late that the law has compelled the chaining of legs as well as arms It was a sinister sight, the one dark suggestion in the otherwise gay, free life of the new Ayuthia.

But in spite of my interest in the new city, it was the old capital that claimed my imagination, and set me tramping over the ruins which lie hardly more than a mile from the river. We spent three hours among the remnants of colossal structures, stumbling over boulders, and grinding the dust of former grandeur beneath our feet. But some walls still stand, parts from which one can, in fancy, reconstruct the whole. The temples interested me most, for they reminded me of the temples of Southern India, particularly of Trichinipoly. They are similar enough to bear strong evidence in support of the claim that Indian culture penetrated to the country which is now Siam long before the coming of the Thai, and long before Buddha. The name alone is evidence. Ayuthia was originally Ajodha, which takes us to the very banks of the Ganges The whirligig of history! This recent world convulsion of ours is nothing more than a repetition on a larger scale of the happenings of the dim past. It is only an amplification of a drama that has been going on since the beginning. The passing of empires is only a detail of the inevitable march of events.

Ruins, and a gigantic Buddha, and crumbling walls—that is all that is left of the old Ayuthia. Even the royal elephant hunt, which was a part of the old tradition, has been discontinued. The year 1905 was the last in which an elephant hunt was arranged at the usual place, about an hour's ride from Ayuthia. In reality it was no hunt, merely a drive of the animals from their haunts in the back country over the plains toward the V-shaped palisades that make the entrance of the kedah. Elephants which had been broken to become beasts of burden were used to drive the others—a sight to sadden a real sportsman. But, even so, the spectacle of the maddened tuskers making the rush in numbers must have been magnificent—a spectacle worthy of the old Ayuthia.

CHAPTER VII

THE KLONDYKE OF THE INDIES

FROM Bangkok to Belawan Deli, the eastern port of Sumatra, I travelled in a freight boat, flying the Siamese flag. Rice was the cargo. The appeal of a slow journey through tropic seas had fixed my choice on the *Mahidol* instead of one of the weekly passenger boats to Singapore where I expected to change steamers, but by the time I learned that the captain had received orders to proceed direct to Sumatra, tarrying at Singapore only for fumigation, I had become so interested in him that I decided to stay with his ship.

He had tales to tell; tales that I began to hear while we ploughed through the Gulf of Siam, and I watched the sea serpents bobbing about. Some were grey green; some yellow with brown spots, and ugly thick heads; our heavily freighted boat gave us a near view. But it was not of them that the captain talked. At the outbreak of the war he had been in command of a twelve thousand ton German steamer plying between Europe and India. While his charge was interned at Karachee, he had spent five years behind barbed wire in the central provinces of India. When released he discovered that, being a native of Schleswig Holstein, he had become a full-

fledged Dane. During those five years he had been librarian of the prison camp, and had read much.

"But there is nothing in books as good as a sea life," he said. "To take charge of this five hundred ton rice boat was a return to living."

Next after the captain, the cook was the most interesting person on board. He was a Chinaman, with a contract for feeding us all at so much a head. It was an unfortunate contract for everyone except himself, because he had the Chinese flair for thrift. He was as generous with rice as one could wish, but with accessories he played a phantom game with much dexterity. He had a clever scheme, too, for drowning my appetite. The cost of whisky was almost nothing in comparison with that of food, so he came to me, in season and out of season, and smilingly offered a cheering glass. The engineer must have been in partnership, for he made nightly visits to me stretched on my mattress on deck, and he never came without a glass of whisky and soda.

All on board, from cook to captain, found diversion in playing with the fawn-coloured, blue-eyed Siamese cat, and watching the fights between it and the monkey which the first mate was taking home to give his sweetheart. A posting of my notes and a little work at Malay satisfied an occasional need for industry. So the days and nights passed.

The twelfth day out from Bangkok we steamed to the Straits of Malacca, close enough to Sumatra's eastern shore to discern the jagged line of

mountains that form the spine of that trapeze-shaped island. Some of the peaks were overhung with vapour; significant of volcanic action below. We neared the flat, swampy coast, entered the channel, and were at the port of Belawan Deli.

It was a port incredibly different from the one I had entered on my visit eight years before. Then the small Chinese boat I was on had dropped anchor at a ramshackle landing which, with wooden sheds, made an adequate equipment. These were gone, and in their place was a substantial pier, and stretches of iron-roofed warehouses. Prahus, sampans, coastwise steamers and freight boats with cargoes of rubber and tobacco crowded the water, but the greatest obstacle to our landing was the twelve thousand ton steamer *Jan Pieters Zoon Coen*, preparing to start for Rotterdam. The eastern entrance of the big Dutch island which is thirteen times the size of the Netherlands, had become a real harbour, having traffic with the great world.

Halved by the Equator, Sumatra lies slantwise between the Indian Ocean on the west, and the Straits of Malacca and the South China and the Java seas on the east. Its width at the north is one hundred and twenty-five miles; at the south, twice that distance. A mountain range runs the length of the island one thousand and twenty-three miles; some of the peaks tower twelve thousand feet, and are visible from both coasts. Of the ninety volcanoes that have been discovered in this range, twelve are still active, a safety valve

against destruction. Forests, jungles, many rivers with wild waterfalls, make the island one of great scenic beauty, and the great stretches of cultivation of the rich alluvial soil show the present and potential riches of Sumatra.

The population numbers about five and a quarter millions, with a varied distribution of race and religion. More than four million are of Arab-Malay origin, and are Mohammedans. In the vicinity of Lake Toba are about six hundred thousand Bataks, of Polynesian origin, and with a religion which is a mixture of animism and spiritism. Two hundred thousand Chinese, five thousand pure Arabs, twenty thousand natives of mixed blood, and ten thousand Europeans make up the whole.

The history of the island is romantic. The first mention occurs in Chinese records of A.D. 454, noting the existence of an island, named Kendali, later Sanbotsai, and still later Samoedra. This island was described as lying between Cambodja and Java, and with inhabitants whose habits and racial characteristics were like both the Siamese and the Cambodjans. Ethnologists trace for the people an Arab origin, coming from Farther India and arriving at Sumatra by way of Malacca, gathering in on their migrations other Malays. Like many another nation in those times they paid tribute to China, tribute which the Emperor of China received with a magnificent gesture, for in 1156 there is record of this message: " So long as you are attracted by our civilising influence, I am glad. The products of your

country are welcome, but they are of minor importance to me."

Toward the end of the thirteenth century, the Kingdom of Samoedra was well established on the western coast, and the entire island was known by that name. With the coming of European seafarers, who changed the name to Sumatra, the beginnings of new history were made The first advent of the Dutch took place in 1660, but it was not until after the Napoleonic era, and after the French and the English had in turn temporarily occupied what is now the Dutch Indies, that the Government of the Netherlands attempted to get a permanent foothold in Sumatra.

The difficulties were apparently unsurmountable. Natives were fierce and spirited, determined not to be conquered. The climate and topographical conditions made guerrilla warfare the only means of battle. Those who helped in the conquest were well aware of the dangers they were going out to meet, for the Dutch doughboys sang:

> "Ik ben het leven moe,
> Ik gar naar Atjeh toe."

(I am tired of life. I go onward to Atjeh.)

There were other parts of Sumatra which made excellent objectives for those who were tired of life, though of all the tribes the Atjehs were the most difficult to overcome. Fighting continued in the northern mountains until 1906, when they were finally subdued, and a stable government established,

America, too, had her bit of experience; for in 1831 an American man-of-war meted out punishment for acts of piracy.

The doggedness of the Dutch had been put to a crucial test, but the rewards are great. The resources of Sumatra, barely scratched, are practically unlimited. With the high altitudes, the rich soil, the abundant rainfall and tropic sunshine, there is hardly a plant that cannot be successfully cultivated. Tobacco and rubber are the principal products on the eastern coast, but ranking close are copra, coffee, palm oil, spices, rice, tea and sugar cane. Cattle are important in the west and north. The minerals known to exist have won for the island the name "Klondyke of the Indies" Gold digging is the oldest and the youngest mining enterprise in Sumatra. The oldest because since ages gold has been washed out of alluvial and diluvial river deposits Also gold was obtained out of quartz and slate by the primitive mining processes of two centuries ago North of Paman at the bambang (mine) Salida, the first Dutch attempt at mining was made and soon abandoned, at the end of the seventeenth century. The Portuguese had tried it in 1521, having sent out an expedition for the purpose. They fancied it an El Dorado, and named one of the mountains Ophir. It is the youngest mining scheme because gold mining was attempted on a large scale and by the most modern methods after coal and iron had been mined, successfully and extensively. The year 1908 marks the success of the Dutch engineer Verbeeck and the

American Spaulding, and eventually led to the organisation of the Salida gold mining company. There are also successful gold mining companies in Bengkoelen and other parts of Sumatra.

For all of this I was prepared by my former visit. And besides my first hand contact I had another basis of knowledge of the island. Men of my blood had taken a more or less vigorous hand in Sumatra's destiny, settled there in the early days of colonisation, and have been connected with the administration. And best help of all for this visit was a letter from the Gouverneur-General of the Dutch East Indies, sent out from Batavia, the seat of the Colonial Government, introducing me to all officials It opened all doors for me, beginning at the very moment of arrival, when there was no room at the pier for the Siamese freight boat to make landing

A tug brought the quarantine officer, who made hasty examination Then I took up a megaphone and talked with the captain of the great *Jan Pieters Zoon Coen* Might I reach the wharf by way of his boat?

He had read the Gouverneur-General's letter, printed in the official bulletin, and gave cordial assent So I bade a hasty good-bye to my *Mahidol* friends, boarded the great steamer by way of a rope ladder which was let down for me, tarried for a bit of talk with some of the passengers who were off for Europe, and walked down the gang plank.

The letter saved me from the usual immigration

formalities. The officials knew that I was no Pan-Islamite, so I was spared the grilling ordinarily given to arrivals; nor did I have to deposit the customary twenty-five guilders, which is taken as insurance against an influx of paupers, and for burial expense in case of need, but refunded when one leaves the island. I waited only to give directions for the sending on of my luggage, then set out on the twenty-mile motor ride to Medan, the chief trading, banking and social centre of the eastern coast.

More amazing changes, of which the Hôtel de Boer may serve as type. It had doubled in size, but for all that I was tucked away in the only vacant room; in the old days one might make choice among many. Formerly I had revelled in food as unmistakably Dutch as is found in a provincial town in Holland. Now I had to pick out these dishes from a menu designed to please the palates of the travellers of all nationalities, who on their way to the various fields of activity in the interior, stop in Medan.

The town is European; that is, it is Dutch. The Hollanders, of all the great colonising peoples, most surely transplant the home customs, and so far as may be, the home aspect of things. The Englishman takes his dinner jacket, his whisky and soda and his English heart, and lets it go at that. But the Dutch somehow manage to bring Holland to the far places. It is Holland that one sees in the flaxen-haired children, though they are guarded by native nurses, and are playing with monkeys on the broad lawns. Always there are little wicker chairs, and hobby

horses—things one sees nowhere else in the tropics. Always on these broad lawns is a summer house, with a table covered with a blue and white cloth, and bearing a huge coffee pot kept warm with a coffee-cosy. Mynheers and Mevrouws sit about eating the raisin cake of Holland as they smoke and talk. Always there is a baby carriage, for every man, except the junior clerks, is married and has a large family.

I came to Medan on Hari Besar, which is Big Day. Hari Besar falls on the first and sixteenth of each month; legal holidays, they are, and take the place of a Sunday rest day, since neither the tobacco nor rubber plantations can go untended four days a month. They are the most important days in the lives of the coolies, just as they are to the young assistants, who come to town in their autos, or drive to some remote plantation for a glimpse of some young meisje who is there. Always there is a ball in the hotel on Hari Besar, and so, on the night of my arrival, I felt as though all Eastern Sumatra had come to greet me. Pretty Dutch girls, and fat Dutch matrons, planters and business men and officials, we all whirled about in valses and fox-trots. It was a happy return.

CHAPTER VIII

BIG GAME IN THE WILHELMINA MOUNTAINS

In the hope of finding a straying elephant herd, John and I set out from Medan, headed for the foothills of the Wilhelmina Mountains. I had come on him at the Witte Societat—the white club to be found wherever the Dutch are, even at home in the Hague—found him planning a hunt, and straightway accepted his invitation to join

"For even if you don't get an elephant," he said, "you will see a part of the country and have experiences you might otherwise miss"

By far the greater part of Sumatra is still in a primitive state, tempting to the adventurous. One does not travel far without seeing monkeys, deer, wild boar, huge bats, flying dogs, and many varieties of snakes and birds. But the larger and more ferocious animals are less frequently met, and nowadays one may spend months on the island without seeing an elephant, a tiger or a tapir. But occasionally a tiger, too old to catch boar, becomes a man hunter, and ventures close to the settlements. Occasionally, too, a herd of elephants strays down from the mountains, and raises havoc on plantations by uprooting trees, or tearing up pipe lines in the oil districts. Hunting for pleasure is too vigorous a sport for the

busy planters, but when necessary they go out with their guns to prevent danger to life and property. Proprietors of the large estates, especially south in Palembang, sometimes employ professional elephant hunters. John is semi professional. He likes the sport, and finds the sale of the ivory brings a welcome addition to his income.

All the zest of a fresh experience was in this adven ture. I had never hunted elephants; had indeed done no hunting whatever in Sumatra On my former visit I had had an uneasy feeling that the tigers were hunting me, so frequent were their raids on the rubber plantation where I visited Whenever we set a trap with a goat for bait we were reasonably sure of a catch unless, as sometimes happened, the animal was strong enough to run away with the trap.

We left Medan at daybreak The Ford which was to take us to the edge of the jungle held our equipment. Besides our guns and rifles, we took canned goods, mosquito netting and hammocks We were to pick up our coolies at a palm oil plantation just before we entered the bosch.

Meanwhile, the bosch seemed a world away The roads we spun along were lined with Djatti, the Sumatra oak, and with Poko Rajah (king of the jungle) with lace like foliage flaring into a wide crown. We passed through Deli and Langkat, great parks of rubber and tobacco, and stopped at the Langkat club. Here was my first disappointment, for almost as strongly as I hoped to find an elephant did I wish for a glimpse of the club's most notable member, the

Sultan of Langkat. It would have been an experience worth remembering to make the acquaintance of that spectacular gentleman who, though his power is shorn, probably finds compensation in his monthly income of eighty thousand guilders, derived from his oil estates. The rental paid by foreigners for their concessions is not given directly to him; it is paid into the Landschapskas, a government bank, which administers the money. But both the Sultan of Langkat and the Sultan of Deli receive incomes so stupendous that they are able to gratify every whim, keep up many palaces and maintain harems as large as they desire, which is large indeed. With the remainder of the money the Landschapskas builds and keeps up roads, betters hygienic conditions and attends to other public works.

And all this, John pointed out, was not just the sort of information one would expect to gather on an elephant hunt.

There was little travel on the roads For long stretches we seemed to have the world to ourselves, except for the men who operated the ferries over the streams. Odd arrangements, these ferries. The raft, freighted with our Ford, was punted over with bamboo poles, and kept in the right course by a pulley running on a wire stretched across the river.

In so deserted a world the huge cloud of dust ahead of us on one road demanded instant investigation. We speeded up, and were soon alongside a triumphal procession Fifty proud coolies followed in the wake of a bullock cart in which was the head of a

tusker. Here was not merely excitement; it was the best possible omen for elephant hunters.

The man who had done the killing was ahead on his motor cycle, but he rode back to meet us. "It was simple enough," he told us, modestly. "We got word about the herd of elephants. The manager of the tobacco plantation hadn't returned from Hari Besar, so I had the good luck of going after them. It isn't often that an assistant gets such a chance. The coolies took me to the place where the elephants were grazing I stooped low to keep out of sight, and watched my chance. The best place to aim, you know, is just below the ear, or between the ear and eyes. The elephant's brain is so small, it is easy to miss."

All this is information that the potential elephant hunter has on tap. He knows, too, that if the elephant is merely wounded he will go back into the mountains, cover his wound with mud, and may not die for a week or longer. There is danger to the hunter in the shot that misses, for the herd is likely to attack in a body. Indeed, there is always an element of danger since the hunter must be at close range to take successful aim, but most accidents happen because a man, face to face with big game, trembles with excitement or fear. But, unless wounded or frightened, the only really dangerous elephant is the solitary one that, because diseased or because the other males have combined against him, has been discarded by his herd. Beware of the outcast elephant who roams alone. He will attack

anything that crosses his path, and his sense of smell is a surer guide toward his victim than his sight, which is dim in the glare of the sun. Herds never make unprovoked attack; one may go among them as among cattle, and they are found usually in the same formation—the calves grazing in front of their watchful mothers. The tuskers come last, forming a rear guard

We accepted the lucky hunter's invitation to spend the night at his plantation, and so were present at the burial of the elephant's head an interesting detail of a successful hunt.

The coolies dug a grave in the lawn in front of the house. The head was put in, and covered, but with the butt ends of the tusks sticking through the earth. This is in order that the tusks may be pulled out after a few days without disturbing the rest of the head, which is left in the ground for three months They come with astonishing readiness; I know, because on my return from the mountains I helped in the pulling The tusks are kept as trophies, or sold, for they always command a good price in the ivory market. In the three months that the head is left buried, worms and insects complete the work of stripping bare the skull, and thus preparing it to ornament the owner's hall, or to be sent to the museum of whichever European town he came from, and now wishes to impress with his prowess as a hunter.

Feet, and heart, and a slice from the shoulder of the killed elephant had also been saved, each for a

different reason. The feet were measured, and the height of the tusker computed With a hoof circumference of three feet and eight inches, we knew that his height up to the shoulder had been seven feet and four inches tall for a tusker on the Sumatra east coast. The salvaged heart would be sold to a Chinese, and when ground into powder would become "Obat Koewat" a strong and potent medicine. A rhinoceros tusk is also "Obat Koewat." So, too, was the covering of an unborn fawn, which, on a later hunt, we found in a killed doe. It sold for a hundred guilders.

The shoulder had been brought along for food It is the only part of the elephant which is considered edible, and is rarely touched by Europeans. We had it with our rice for dinner; found it stringy and like goat meat in taste. I was warned that it was heating to the blood, and that night I thought that my sleeplessness and the noises that I heard were due to having partaken. Next morning I discovered a more convincing reason. A part of the barbed wire fence around the fresh mound had been torn away, wild boars had tried to get at the elephant's head.

If game were so close as that, I saw no reason why we should not try to get some. A wild boar in the hand was certainly worth an elephant in the bush to the amateur hunter, especially since, in the pessimistic mood following a sleepless night, I felt certain that I would get no elephant. John allowed himself to be persuaded. When we returned in half

an hour John had a deer, I had bagged a small boar and some partridges. I was proud of the birds, but could get no one to share my enthusiasm; and the lucky hunter of the day before was especially indifferent. A partridge looks very small indeed to a man who had brought down an elephant.

A few hours more in the Ford, and we arrived at the palm oil estate at the foot of the Wilhelminas, the last establishment of civilisation in that part of Sumatra. Beyond the mountains is the Atjeh country—wild, romantic. We made our headquarters at the estate, collected a gang of coolies, and made final preparations for the hunt. The assistant on the plantation joined us, so we were a party of three white men and a couple of dozen coolies. The jungle was as wild and difficult of penetration as any I had seen in Sarawak. The coolies went in front, cutting the way with their small, sharp parangs. We followed, single file; we crawled under brush, we climbed over fallen trees, we leapt, we slid in mud, we did everything but walk for the six miles before John called a halt

We had come to a slight elevation, and there he ordered that camp be made The coolies cleared the thicket, fastened our hammocks six feet above the ground, and after we had hoisted ourselves into these swinging beds, they pulled the mosquito net close about us. A smouldering fire was a further protection from the pests. John said we were in no danger; that one seldom meets big game in the night time so far in the jungle. In any event we

were too tired to think of danger, and we dropped off to sleep.

I was awakened by a downpour of rain, so sudden and terrific that I thought I was being drowned When I jumped out of my hammock I sank knee deep in mud.

John, always energetic and optimistic, took the storm for a good omen. He ordered an instant breaking of camp, and made us follow him through the swampy gullies. With our white helmets topping our mud plastered bodies we looked like huge moving toadstools. Amusing as were the others, I must have looked far funnier, for my face was badly swollen The netting had kept out the mosquitoes, but the meshes had not been fine enough to protect against agas-agas tiny, black flies with a venomous sting.

Day broke, and the torrents of rain stopped as suddenly as they had begun. I felt again the compelling charm of the jungle; silent to me, since, like most white men, my ears are not so sensitively attuned that they hear the sounds of the multitudinous jungle life. And life there was everywhere; insects and reptiles all about us; monkeys overhead, and the larger animals that, with jungle intelligence, the coolies gave assurance were not far away. The guide indicated the direction. We were eager to be on our way, but the natives grumbled, though with Malay gentleness.

"Makan tiada; minum tiada; rokok tiada," I heard them mutter. It meant "food is not; drink is not; smoke is not." We saw the force of their

remarks. We had had quinine, and each a drink out of the community flask when we had tumbled out of our hammocks and started through the jungle; whereas they had had nothing. John gave orders that a fire be lit, and rice cooked.

Also we rested; a restoration of energy we were thankful for when we got to higher ground and found the way becoming more and more difficult. We broke our backs stooping to escape overhanging boughs; we climbed over more fallen trees; we scaled another hill, and from it looked out over impenetrable brush, and more trees, and a river. If there were kampongs they were hidden in the jungle. Misty clouds travelled over the mountains; but two saddles stood out plainly, and between them appeared a dark object, and another, and another. . . .

"They are coming," John whispered.

Single file came the herd of elephants A big female led the way. She walked briskly; her swinging trunk testing the ground to see whether it would carry her weight. Then, satisfied, she firmly set her feet down The others followed, and showed confidence in their leader by placing their feet in her tracks. Last came the herd bull. There were in all about thirty.

Fortunately for us the breeze came from their direction, so they were not warned by our scent. We crouched behind rattan bushes, breathlessly watching them, as they made straight for a pool of stagnant water, and began to throw the damp, cool earth over their heads and backs—a mud shower.

Then they spread out to graze, biting at the bamboo, grass, roots and bark of the fallen trees. The calves —there were some babies among them—lay down.

At that moment nothing was farther from my mind than killing; the scene was one of peace and contentment that must have touched even a hardened hunter. A big bull strayed away from the others, and came close to where we lay on our stomachs behind our rattan cover as though scenting danger, or at least an alien presence; but, reassured, it came down again, and he went on with his grazing, stepping here and there, selectively, his trunk dangling. I barely breathed Suddenly he turned, and came a few steps in our direction I lifted myself a little, and grasped my gun. He espied us then, lifted his trunk, and trumpeted fiercely. He was in perfect position for me to shoot, and I let go.

John's shot instantly followed mine.

We saw the great grey bulk shudder, but the giant remained standing as though nailed to the ground. The shot had hit home I fired again, and without a sound the great fellow broke down on the rear end, turned on one side, and did not move again.

I started to run toward him, but John held me back. "We'll keep at a safe distance for ten minutes," he said.

But no sign of life was given, and we walked close. The first bullet from my Winchester had been deadly. It had entered the ear, demolished the brain and passed out through the other side of the skull. John's shot from his 9 5 mm Mannlicher had come

below mine, and my second one near the eye had shattered part of the skull at the other end. When I stood alongside the huge bulk, I realised in what danger I had been. And I felt puny, and presumptuous, and, too, inordinately proud.

The rest of the herd had stampeded with the first shot, so we had no chance at another. The tusks, skull, trunk and tail were all that we salvaged to take away. From the moment of its falling the carcass was infested with red ants and other insects; the natives beat them off with improvised torches.

John wanted to follow the herd. My vote was against it. I had had enough. Besides, elephants travel astonishingly fast, and it might take several days to overtake that herd, and to run into another herd would be sheer luck such as we had just had, and which does not happen twice. So it was decided that I, with a few coolies, should return to the palm oil plantation in the edge of the jungle, while the main force go on with John.

The stench from the carcass had become unbearable, and both parties were glad to get away. Another night, and the tigers would have left nothing but the bones. If it had not been so far from plantations it would have been our duty to pour oil on the carcass and set fire, lest the beasts be attracted, and then do damage to human beings. But whenever it is possible to avoid it, this is not done, because it is against the adat of the natives.

Now adat, of which I was to hear much, means the time-honoured custom, the right procedure in the

ELEPHANT HUNTING IN EASTERN SUMATRA

eyes of the native. The European in Sumatra soon discovers that adat plays an important part in colonial life, and that it is to his advantage to respect it.

We left the carcass where it had fallen, and I, with my six coolies bearing the trophies, started back toward the palm oil plantation. The stupidity and blindness of civilised men! Without the coolies I could not have found the trail that they had made as we came, cutting diligently with their sharp parangs. Birds flew about us; wild chicken that taste, I have been told, like the wild turkey of Virginia, but I had no desire to shoot.

I made myself presentable as a guest by taking a dip in the stream -free from crocodiles in the high country. Values change swiftly. To come again to this estate with its European household was like a return to civilisation and safety; yet we were on the verge of the forest, with wild animals so close that the children are never left for a moment without attendants. I stayed the night, and in the morning went on to a rubber estate in the lowlands, where it had been agreed that I should wait for John's return.

When I arrived Van, who is manager of the estate, was out making his rounds of inspection, but his wife, a Malay girl, welcomed me. She made a pretty picture with her black hair falling to her waist, and her sarong wrapped close about her. She had not been aware that a guest was expected, but she accepted me as a matter of course, for this is plantation hospitality.

"Lucas Bols?" she asked. No knowledge of

Malay was needed to furnish the meaning of that household word; in use in Holland since the sixteenth century. Gin. But after that, until Van's return, conversation flagged. He soon arrived, and we at once sat down to a home made rice table.

Rice table So soon in the Dutch colonies of the tropics does one accept that comprehensive culinary institution that one is likely to forget the phrase is not self-explanatory. Forgets, too, one's own amazement the first time the huge plate on which it is served is set before one. Immediately after the coming of this plate, which is probably twice the size of an ordinary soup plate, there appears a dish of rice at your elbow. You serve yourself, and the attendant passes on, and another dish appears at your elbow. This time it is meat. The next time it is Tjabeh, that pepperiest pepper in all the world; beside it the ch'lis of Mexico are lukewarm. At the next dish which probably contains chicken, you look up, and see the queue of waiting servants, each bearing a dish. This retinue is a picturesque thing, it takes your mind away from the food. The way the head scarfs are tied is a detail that catches the eye; it and the manner of tying is no accident, it indicates the place the boy came from; sometimes the secret society to which he belongs. You bring your mind back, serve yourself with the next dish, and the next, and the next. Rice table it is; everything that ever has been on a table comes in that endless procession.

This is rice table at its most elaborate. At Van's

house it was less complicated, but still a rich repast. He tore himself from it to go back to his work, for the manager's rounds begin at six in the morning and last until noon; start again at half-past two, and last until half-past five. The coolies' hours have been shortened in compliance with the drift of the times, but the thrifty Hollander works as always.

Evening brought the planters from miles around. They came on bicycles, and on motor-cycles, on horseback, in traps and in autos—it was a gathering of the Deli-Langkat community Big men, most of them six-footers, and all were from the Waterkant in the Northern part of Europe. Conversation took the place of the elaborate supper which, a few years back, would have been prepared. Business is bad, and everyone is conserving. Roasted peanuts and gin served for food and refreshment

Van brought out his hunting trophies, and by the enthusiastic talk, I saw how much pride the Dutch colonial takes in these tokens of his skill and courage. That night there was rumour of a herd of deer making too free with the tobacco plants on a neighbouring estate, and a hunt was at once organised.

Van and I set out in an old buggy, the first Studebaker ever made, I believe, but it was whirled swiftly along by the Batak ponies. An auto passed us, and something happened. I shall never know what, for I was too busy picking myself out of the dirty ditch into which we were whirled to make investigations. Down the road the ponies waited for us, and we climbed in and tried it once more The next stream

was one which had to be ferried; water was high and overflowed the banks. An attempt to get the buggy on to the raft resulted in another spill. We gave it up, left the ponies and buggy to be fished out by the coolies, and we walked home. Either it was a bad night for a deer hunt, or the Studebaker was not the proper conveyance to take.

But I had my chance at a deer for all that. There came rumours next day that a pack had been seen in the bosch near the estate. Guided by a native we set out, and took our stations about two hundred feet apart in the border of the bosch. We had worn dark clothes so that, among the black trees, we could not be seen. Evidently the deer were far in the thicket, for there was no sound.

Then I heard a sound like the call of a deer. *Like*, for it was from Van's whistle, made from a bit of twig. The response was instantaneous. There came the sound of breaking bush; the rush and pounding of hoofs, and across the road, the fleet, beautiful creatures ran, like phantom horses in the moonlight. The does were ahead. Then came the bucks, heavier, more slow of movement. We shot. Van brought down a doe. I, a buck.

During my stay at this plantation I made headway with my Malay, for the women of the household — Van's wife, her sisters and half-sisters, became my teachers. Charming teachers they were. I know of no more beautiful dress for a woman than the sarongs which reach from waist to ankle, and are

topped by kabayas. They love jewellery, too, and wear much of it. These young women took a childish pleasure in ransacking my bags for baubles I had brought from Bangkok pawnshops.

The native women are childlike in many ways, and shy. "Takut, Tuan" (I am frightened, sir) is the phrase the European new-comer first learns, through constant hearing.

It is hard to reconcile this shyness and apparent docility with the tales that one hears of these women when roused to passion—tales that one hears both from the Europeans, and from the native women themselves The European to whom one of them has become attached must beware of incurring her jealousy, and rousing a suspicion of indifference. They tell of horrors worked; of how, in the old days, when a young planter was starting back to Europe, his native wife ground bamboo shoots to powder and mixed with his coffee. The powdering of the shoots in no wise affected their fertility. They germinated, grew, and months later, the man would die in great agony, his intestines perforated by the plants.

Yet more dreadful are the love potions that they mix. Goena-goena is the name given to this dark chemistry, the most revolting, I believe, in all the formulæ of love-compelling drinks. Such leavings as one might find in a chiropodist's and a hairdresser's are the least objectionable of things which, powdered, are mixed with the food and drink of the recalcitrant lover. It sounds like witchcraft, but both European and native believe in the efficacy of this demon

chemistry. Both admit the practice, and both believe that it works. But while the women believe that it holds the love of the man, the Europeans declare that its power lies in enervation, in the utter wreckage of the man through loss of will and power to escape.

And all this, as John would have pointed out, was strange knowledge to pick up on an elephant hunt.

When, after days, John came, he was cadaverous of face, and so weak we had to lift him out of the trap. He ate ravenously before we could get a word out of him. But, like every other hunter, he gave his story in detail when he started on it.

He had abandoned the elephants' trail for other game, when he discovered rhinoceros tracks beside a body of water. The coolies fixed a seat for him in a tree. There from a look-out fifteen feet above the ground, he sat and waited, his gun ready. By bright moonlight he saw the rhino, a huge fellow, weighing, John estimated, fifteen hundred pounds. It had taken three bullets to kill him. The coolies had worked a day pulling him out of the swamp, and another half day in pulling off the hide and salting it.

John might be half-starved, but he was triumphant. It had been a record-breaking hunt. The rhino's hide was the most valuable trophy he could have brought from the bosch.

CHAPTER IX

PLANTATIONS CAPTURED FROM THE JUNGLE

THE hundred mile stretch between Medan and Siantar, the little town at the end of the railroad, is an almost unbroken succession of plantations—tea, rice, rubber and coffee Bound for the Batak country, I motored along this road with some friends who were to visit one of the great tea estates, and I soon decided that Lake Toba might wait while I, too, tarried for a near view of that section

"Klaatergoud," says conservative Java, speaking of Sumatra "Tinsel." The attitude of the dwellers on the smaller island with its generations of proved riches is much that of the Virginian of twenty years ago toward Oklahoma. But while I spun along the plantation-lined road I realised that Sumatra is proving herself, and will, after the manner of the proved, be saying "Klaatergoud" about some other island in years not far away. So changed was the aspect of the country since I had last travelled that road, that it might all have been new ground to me.

A tyre went flat. While the boys were working on it I strayed off the road into a well-kept path through a plantation—hundreds of acres of full-grown rubber trees stretched about me. Suddenly

I came on a deserted barn, built high on bamboo poles, and covered with thatch. It brought me up short. There was nothing remarkable about the barn except that I had helped build it. This, then, was the Paya Pinang estate.

Eight years before the estate was being opened, with a friend of mine in charge. A forest jungle stretched in all directions. My friend, with hundreds of coolies, was at work clearing it, cutting down and uprooting trees, building roads and bridges. From the underbrush oozed the decay of ages of dead animal and vegetable life. I scrambled up on the porch of the little deserted barn, which had seemed quite a building when we worked on it, and looked through the lanes of trees at the imposing villa where the manager lived. No use to go there looking for my friend; he was not here to see the transformation worked by his heroism of hope and work. There had been enormous sacrifice of life, too, for fever and dysentery and flesh-sore had killed many a coolie—sicknesses that were induced by work in the swamps. The replenishing of their ranks had meant little to the employers, for wages then were not more than twenty cents a working day. And a working day was twelve hours long.

But time has changed things for the worker as well as for the land. Neither the question of field labour, nor of domestic service, is so simple in Sumatra as it used to be. Wages have more than doubled, and hours are shortened. The spirit of the times has reached to these far corners of the

A PLANTATION CAPTURED FROM THE JUNGLE IN CENTRAL SUMATRA.

world. But even so, the planter is still able to have servants in numbers which seem an army to the newcomer, and of an efficiency to please even the Dutch housewife.

My servant problem had been solved with Djok, who was with me on this trip, and throughout my stay on the island. He was a dapper, well-groomed little man, a Hailan Chinese, and I had engaged him because of the fine spurt of pidgin-English in which he had answered my question about his knowledge of the language. Here, I thought, was just the man I needed. He would never misunderstand me But I soon discovered that his English was for exhibition purposes only; that first geyser spurt was really all he knew. Not that he did not try to speak my language, and his efforts brought complications. He told me, for example, that on his last job he had been a barber. Joyfully I submitted my chin and my razor to his hands.

While I sopped up the blood I made further inquiries, and learned, when he explained with gestures, that it was a bar-boy that he had been. No doubt to his Chinese ears the sound was identical, but the technique is so different that I took no more chances. I restricted him to Malay.

And it was in Malay that he summoned me from the deserted barn, with word that the tyre was mended. We whirled away toward Siantar.

Post and telegraph offices, a department store, and many residences have made into a modern town the little kampong of eight years ago We would have

been comfortable at the hotel, but plantation hospitality bore us away to the tea estate.

The coolness was delightful, for the estate lies one thousand five hundred feet above the sea. It was a night for refreshing sleep. I was up early to go with my host on his rounds of inspection. Eight hundred Malay women were at work in the fragrant tea fields picking the leaves which they dropped into huge baskets. High slanting hats sheltered them from the sun, and they in their long sarongs were picturesque workers. I was startled to see my host slap one, then another.

"It is the only way to get them to pick only the ripe leaves. They injure the plants by gathering the others."

We saw all these women again a little later when they had assembled at the weighing sheds in the factory, bringing their baskets that their morning's work might be weighed, and their earnings fixed. A forewoman was in charge here, a formidable creature in a long black skirt and jacket, and carrying a handbag which appeared to be one of her emblems of authority. The other emblem was a whip, which she used frequently. From the weighing sheds the tea was carried by mechanical contrivances. All the preparation necessary to make the tea ready for export was made in this factory.

A forty-mile horseback ride gave me a glimpse of the three adjoining plantations—rubber, palm oil and coffee—interesting to me because they are the last European establishments tributary to the eastern

coast. The planters were especially proud of the coffee, declaring that the Sumatra coffee is the best, and brings the highest price, of any grown It all is sent to the United States.

There were other rides, too, on the back of a Batak pony; rides which took me away from the cultivated district, and gave me view of virgin lands. They reminded me of rides taken not so many years ago on a Texas pony across lands of waste, and which now have been transformed into bountifully productive country. If all this could be done so swiftly in Oklahoma, why not on the tropical flats? Labour would not be wanting Just above these plantations are six hundred thousand Bataks who must, sooner or later, put their shoulders to the wheel of civilisation.

Others are dreaming this dream. On one of my rides I came on three men who, in their aspect, reminded me of gold prospectors. And, indeed, they were prospectors for gold, though by the indirect route of agriculture. They were three Germans who had lost their holdings in Samoa because of the war, and here in Sumatra were looking for fresh opportunity. And I knew that this party of prospectors was only one of the many that would be coming from all the corners of the world. I was glad; and I was sorry Glad, because the world needs new opportunity, and must make the waste places productive Sorry, because with the passing of the wild country, a part of the beauty of the world passes

CHAPTER X

BATAKLAND

THE motor carrying Djok and myself and the luggage climbed steadily the road cut through the wilderness beyond the tea plantation; we were off for the Batak country surrounding Lake Toba. We had started at six in the morning; by eight we had crossed the highest point on the way, and looked down on a stretch of water amid tree-covered hills and rocky canyons. As we spun closer to the lake, the village Prapat came into view, and bit by bit resolved itself into its details - a few Batak huts, with their steep, thatched roofs; a few buildings of the design that Europeans bring to the Orient, and, on a knoll, a plain wooden building with a high steeple. Native life, a suggestion of the governing nation, and a mission church —there before me lay all the clues of interest of this strange region. Whatever developed during my stay would be amplifications of these.

Lake Toba—sacred according to the traditions of the Batak religion—lies midway of the width of Sumatra; midway, too, of the northern half of the island. Twice the size of Lake Geneva, Toba is in the heart of a country of wild beauty, volcanic in origin. Hills, mountains, and dense vegetation press close on the green meadows and sandy beaches

which border the lake with its bays, inlets, and wide gullies. In the centre of the lake is Samoesir Island, with a population of eighty thousand.

Up to 1866, Lake Toba was merely a matter of rumour to Europeans Tales of it floated down to the coast country, but were not verified until the year mentioned, then Van Cats, Baron de Raet, succeeded in reaching the eastern shores The coming of one white man is always the promise, and the menace, of the coming of many, as the natives are well aware. A Batak proverb says "the white man is like the white ant. Once let him into your house and you will never get him out" Early in the seventies a military expedition pushed to the southern end of the lake. In 1892 an engineer set foot on Samoesir, then a peninsula. In 1896 a party of four crossed the lake. Bit by bit a few records had been made; observations set down. It was known that the lake lay two thousand seven hundred and eighteen feet above sea level; that the highest elevation on Samoesir Island was four thousand seven hundred and fifty-five feet Since it had taken four decades to verify the existence of the lake and get some idea of the topography of the surrounding country, I felt reasonably sure that I should find conditions much as they had been on my previous visit, eight years before. But I discovered that in these times of rapid progress it is not safe to build expectation on memory and imagination.

In 1913 it had been considered an achievement of

note to visit Lake Toba. Bad roads, the absence of accommodations, and a doubtful reception by the natives offered scant inducement except to the most adventurous, to make the journey which required several days. Now the entire motor run from Medan to Haranggaul can be made in one morning. And the roads are good.

Eight years ago no stranger, to say nothing of a European, was allowed to stay overnight in any of the kampongs, unless vouched for by a chief. Thanks to a goeroe, that is, a Christianised Batak teacher, I was lodged in a school house, a twenty by twenty shack, which seemed spacious until the hundred inhabitants of the kampong crowded in to watch me sleep. I closed my eyes and pretended to snore, for I felt that I owed them that much entertainment, but sleep itself was impossible in the circumstances. In the morning I stepped into a solo—a boat made of a dug-out tree—which was manned by fourteen husky Bataks, and I was rowed across to a little bay where I might enjoy a swim. The solo was the only boat in sight on the lake. But I was no sooner in the water than a crowd had gathered. The news that a stranger was swimming in their lake travelled fast and far. None wanted to miss the opportunity to see whether the stranger's body was of the same curious paleness as his face and hands. They pushed their fingers into my flesh. They admired the gold fillings in my teeth.

No such thrills awaited me on this visit. The eight years have brought comparative sophistication

to the Toba Batak. A very few have progressed so far that they send their children to school in Java. No longer does the stranger find shelter in a school house. Brastagi has a comfortable hotel where the planter or business man from Medan comes to enjoy the higher altitude. There are hotels in the other villages about the lake, and, too, there are the government rest-houses Pasanggrahan. And if there had been in my mind any vague hope of repeating my solo experience the first sight of the lake would have dispelled it. On the water were many motor launches, as well as numerous other craft. Of the motor launches some were private. Some flew the Dutch flag

I lingered only for breakfast at Prapat, then boarded the government launch *Soemoeroeng*—Batak for Most Famous One—bound for Balige at the southern end of the lake. Besides myself and Djok there were forty passengers, men and women and children. They took me as a matter of course. The Toba Batak no longer stares at the white man; but the white man still stares.

And the Batak is well worth a long look. Larger than the people of the coast tribes—the hill folk are always the taller in these islands—face and body show a Polynesian origin. And just as safely as they have preserved their physical characteristics, the Bataks have kept their animistic faith in spite of the Mohammedan invasion which brought most of Sumatra to the Islam faith.

The last of these invasions was about 1830 when

the Padri sect came up from the south, wrought bloody havoc, carried away women and children, and murdered the Batak's Priester King their priest, and ruler and god, all in one. Warfare raged until the Dutch took a hand, and gradually assumed control Missionaries of the Christian faith, of whom more later, also did their part, working hand in hand with the soldiery.

The greatest obstacle in subduing the Batakes was the faith in Si Singa Mangaradja (Lion King) by which title the Priester King was worshipped. God he was in human form, with the legends of supernatural conditions obtaining at his birth which always centre about deities.

In these legends there is constant recurrence of the mystic seven which obtains in so many religions. Si Singa Mangaradja was carried under his mother's heart for seven years; he was born with seven stout teeth. He could go without food for seven months, and lie in unbroken sleep for another seven months. He had a black and hairy tongue, the sight of which was certain death to mortals, so in mercy, he gave all his orders in writing. Rain and sunshine were under his control. Worshippers came from afar to do homage with prayer and sacrifice.

The legends do not fix the period of the life of the first Priester King. Successor followed successor through the generations; always worshipped in the same manner, and under the same title. The last one—Ompoe Poelo Batoe—was killed in 1908 by Captain Christoffel who, though a Swiss by birth,

commanded the Dutch soldiery and led it into the mountains of Dairi where the Priester King had hidden himself among the Pakpaks, the wildest of all Batak tribes and wherein cannibalism and slave trade still exist. Toba, Karo and Gajo Bataks have come under Dutch influence far more than the Pakpaks. The chase had been long and hard, for it was this last Priester King who had given most trouble to the European pioneers. All the chiefs of the Batak tribes were summoned to witness his funeral ceremonies, made, for obvious reasons, as ostentatious as possible. But, notwithstanding this, and notwithstanding his grave at Bakkara, there are many who believe that the Priester King is not dead, but will reappear Messiah, Mahdi, Priester King —everywhere one finds the same pathetic, determined faith of humans in the indestructibility of their gods.

But that the slain man might really be the last Priester King so far as temporal power was concerned, his kin were imprisoned in Taroetoeng and held for years His son now lives at Bakkara.

With this background of knowledge, I looked with much interest at my fellow passengers on the *Soemoeroeng* They were packed like sardines in the boat, and the effect was an odd mass of broad dark faces above sarong and kabaya or trousers and jacket. They sat stolid and inert until Djok started the phonograph—an experiment I never failed to try - then the mass separated itself into individuals ggling in the rhythm of the music. A white man

ɔ novelty, but a phonograph was. Only a few
· learned, had ever before heard one.
ıalf day's ride across the lake, and by mid-
ɔon I was installed at the Pasanggrahan at
, a most important town in Batakland. With
ıve huts, its substantial buildings with galvan-
ɔofs marking the presence of officials and other
cans, and with its two hotels, Balige is the
of life in this part of the Toba country.
gh the kindness of the Controlleur I was to be
ted to remain at the Pasanggrahan for the
of my stay, although two days is the usual
ɔt. No pleasanter dwelling place could be found
Toba country than this rest house a low
ıg with half a dozen sleeping rooms, a broad
lah, a cool, delightful dining-room, and all
a stone's throw of the lake which is not sacred
man who wishes to fish for golden trout, and
ɔckerel in the moonlight.

food was Dutch as Holland, from which
y most of it had come in tins. Over dinners
ɔervten soup and sausages I had delightful
nionship with inspectors of roads, bridges and
ıays, transportation officials, police and mili-
fficials, all the representatives of the colonial
ıment, in short, as well as the missionaries with
ıteresting talk.

most illuminating and romantic contacts with
ıtaks came through the doors opened for me
se men. There is one day so crowded with
ıt that, in its full swing, it held the high lights

ON THE SHORE OF TOBA LAKE, SUMATRA.

of my stay in Batakland It even brought me to the grave of the Priester King, and into the presence of his son.

It started with a little matter of Dutch diplomacy. The Controleur felt obliged to take a hand in settling a dispute between some tribes on the western shore of the lake, for among these people it is only a short step from argument to killing I was invited to join the party. With us in the motor launch *Koningin Wilhelmina* were a missionary, his wife and baby, who were to be dropped at their station, Mocara.

Our first stop was at an islet south of Samoesir, that the official might make a courtesy visit on the chief—radja over the two thousand inhabitants of the island. I welcomed the chance to see one of the fortified kampongs, well concealed in the thicket, characteristic of the Bataks with their constant fear of an enemy.

The official had been there before, and so could find the hidden path through the jungle growth—a path so narrow that we walked single file. We followed it long before we came to the clearing, where lay the walled kampong. Then we passed through a narrow fortified passage, which brought us to the open space surrounded by Batak huts, built high above the ground, and with high pitched roofs. There was a scurry of natives and dogs and pigs and chickens—it was a type of every tumbledown village to be seen in the Toba country.

The chief received us; he was an old, old man,

tall for the islands. A long scarf was thrown over his shoulder in the manner permitted to a chief. We climbed the ladder into his house, the largest hut in the kampong, but I was glad to climb down again with more evidence of haste than was altogether courteous. The hut was very dirty. My nose told me that, and I had no other way of knowing for it had been too dark to see.

With a gesture the chief indicated the table in the centre of the clearing, offering refreshments. He offered, indeed, to kill a pig, but we pleaded haste. Another gesture sent a boy scurrying up a cocoanut palm, with the agility that is the admiration and the despair of Europeans. When he had brought down the nuts, and we sat at the table drinking the cocoanut milk, I found diversion in watching the Radja's son. He was a dapper man of about twenty five, and during our brief stay made half a dozen changes of costume. Down the ladder from his hut he would come in one sarong and jacket, catch the eye of each of us in turn, and hurry back up the ladder to make another change. And always he had a lemon leaf pinned in his jacket. This amusing evidence of a desire to show off before Europeans was in odd contrast to the stolid dignity of the old chief. The official spoke of Bakkara. In the Radja's answer I caught enough to know that he had mentioned the Priester King.

"He often came here," the official translated for me.

When we had finished our refreshment, and indi-

called that we must go, the chief walked with us through the fortifications, down the hidden path to our boat, and watched us chug away And it was not, I am sure, in tribute to the new order It was because we were going to Bakkara.

Bakkara had a lure for our missionary, too, so when we had come to his station, we dropped there his young wife and the baby; he had concluded to go on with us. She waved good bye from the landing. We watched her transfer the youngster from her arms to an up-to date perambulator, an odd picture as she stood among Batak women with their babies on their backs.

From Mocara our launch hugged the shore, giving us a near view of the wild country of jagged rocks The volcanic origin of the district became more and more apparent. An earthquake had shaken the country a few weeks before, and reclaimed a bit of shore land. At this point on the lake I saw tree trunks twisted into grotesque shapes sticking up out of the water. It was an uncanny sight, and must be terrifying indeed to the natives with their belief that every tree houses a ghost; every rock a demon.

Rougher and rougher grew the country as we neared Bakkara. Caves, mountains, difficult passes could be seen from the lake Topography is always a clue to history, and the aspect of this district was eloquent of the difficulties of colonisation. It showed, too, why the Priester King had chosen it for his stronghold, and from it directed the warfare of his

loyal people. Dutch official and Christian missionary saw in this warfare a fight against civilisation. I, too, saw it so, but I saw it also as a splendid last stand of savagery which must inevitably go down, but which must, for the very integrity of itself, make as strong a fight as possible.

We landed, and since there was still a little time before the official must reach the place of conference, we found a kampong among palms and cactus plants, where we might have food at the home of the goeroe— the native teacher in the mission school. Chicken and rice were swiftly cooked, and swiftly eaten The Dutch official on business bent treats food so lightly it is hard to realise the seriousness with which he approaches the subject in other conditions. The missionary ate his rice Batak fashion. He squeezed it into a ball in his fist, dipped it in gravy, and swallowed it. No fork was needed.

The mission school was like an old country school; the benches filled with Batak children, who eyed us curiously. I sent Djok back to the boat for the Victrola A record called "I don't want to get well," took the children by storm. I could not understand why until the missionary explained that the refrain, "Oh, oh, oh," was a familiar sound. In their language O means I

A barren, uphill stretch lay between us and Bakkara. We set out, a crowd at our heels. It was not only our alien presences and the Victrola which attracted them; they were deeply interested in the business of our visit.

The official explained to me, as we climbed, that this barren stretch was the real reason of our presence The people in the Lowlands wanted to divert some water from the Highlands to irrigate this district. The Highlanders refused permission Evidently they considered it an adat of the water to take the course it did, and they must not tamper. But the Lowlanders needed irrigation so badly that they were pressing the matter even at the risk of offending the spirit that controlled the water. And this was the point at which the big Dutch brother had found he must take a hand.

"But it must be a most careful hand," the official told me.

"You perhaps know the difficulty we had when the Dutch Government decided to cut through the six hundred feet of land which connected Samoesir with the mainland. The proposition was made, and the Bataks rose in protest It was nothing to them that our boats had to sail all the way round the huge peninsula; their prahus could be carried across. Finally we learned the real reason for their protest. It was terror. They believed that the strip of land was the only thing which kept Samoesir from sinking into the water, and so drowning the eighty thousand people who live on it.

"We persuaded for years At last the Bataks declared that they would never consent unless all the Dutch officials should congregate on the island while the cutting was being done Whether they reasoned that the Dutch would not take the chance if there

were danger, or whether they thought the drowning of the eighty thousand would be worth while if they could get rid of so many Dutch, I don't know. But the officials did congregate there, and every Batak chief was invited It was a great occasion. I wouldn't have missed it for much."

When we came to the top of the steep trail, we saw a huge tree which overtowered its neighbours. It was a sacred tree; one of the Batak places of worship. Under it the chiefs had gathered for a discussion of their rights. They sat in a semi-circle, talking, smoking, chewing betel, awaiting the coming of the Dutch official and the Lowlanders. As we approached, the Radja of the Highland district came forward in greeting. The crowd at our heels formed a semi circle of their own. The discussion was under way.

The missionary and I went on. The water rights convention, whatever the developments, whatever the outcome, could not keep me when I knew myself to be near to the grave of the old Priester King, and the kampong which had been his home.

We climbed for half an hour. I had thought we were alone, but on hearing a sound from behind, turned and saw Djok toiling patiently along, bearing the Victrola which he had come to look upon as his chief responsibility in life. Evidently he meant to take no chances on being sent back to the boat to fetch it.

The ridge we followed seemed to be impregnable, but finally we came to an opening just wide enough

for a person to squeeze through. It was a Batak trail, so narrow between the crowding rocks that it served as tunnel. I was a close fit and well covered with mud when we had passed through and into the dark, gloomy path which had been cut through the thicket. There was no sign of life, nothing to indicate that there was a village within miles, yet we were really at the end of our journey. One more turn, a climb up a natural stair, and we were at the kampong's entrance.

The Radja came forward to greet us, so did the other village nobles. A little apart stood a middle-aged man, lighter than most Bataks I noted his skull cap, his blue and white striped jacket, his dingy sarong held in place by a leather belt, and I heard the missionary, Paul Steingraeber, saying that there was the man I had come to see—the son of the Priester King. I was reminded of the sons of other kings dethroned and cast on the scrap heap in other parts of the world. Here was a man who might have been worshipped, might have been leading armies in defence of his land, might be living in all the traditions of Si Singa Mangaradja but for the twist of circumstance.

And here were we—a missionary of the conquering faith, myself an interested stranger, and a Chinese servant bearing a Victrola. It was an awkward moment, but the Victrola saved the situation. They were curious about it, and Djok, choosing at random, put on the Dvorak Humoresque. Steingraeber asked one of the listeners how he liked it. The

answer was that it reminded him of someone who was far, far from his kampong.

Then they brought their instruments from the huts; strange tom-toms, and bamboo flutes, and curious little two stringed instruments made from gourds, with a skin stretched over.

In spite of the music, I had a bit of talk with the Priester King's son really a talk, for he had learned a little Dutch during his imprisonment in Taroetoeng. He told me that he was happy in living so near the grave of his father, for he knew that a bit of the Priester King's soul would come to him. And, speaking, he led me to a mound just outside the kampong. Overhanging it is a sacred tree, with roots intertwining among the rocks piled high on the mound.

The Priester King's son has a life of ease. Besides his monthly pension of seventeen and a half guilders, he can, being an aristocrat, commandeer from his tribe whatever he wishes. It is thus that Batak ukum (law) works. If the chief wishes a bit more land, he takes it; if he wishes to make a feast he sends a slave to bring a pig from his poorer but less powerful neighbour whose pigs happen to be fatter.

While we talked he took from the lady's handbag which he carried, and which I had missed in my first inventory of his costume, a betel nut outfit. The chalk box was ornamented with human teeth, and had been an heirloom from his father. The teeth brought the conversation to cannibalism. The missionary found opportunity to tell me that the

bracelet the great man wore was made from a human jaw.

The Priester King's son admitted the custom as having prevailed. "Thin people taste best. The cheek, and the palm, and the thumb are the choice parts. But it was not because we liked human flesh. It is ukum."

I wondered how that came, and he explained "We punish crime. We do not kill and eat the thief, but the son of the thief. And the thief sits at the feast."

"And if there is no son?"

"Then the thief himself must be eaten That is ukum"

I noticed that he handled a stick of hard black wood, about five feet long, and two inches thick, and cut with rare carvings. I put out my hand, and he let me take the stick Near view revealed a totem pole effect, human faces alternating with those of monsters. There was a male figure, and a female, a sorcerer hugging a rooster, a buffalo, and at the back, extending the length of the stick, a crocodile. Manifestly it was no ordinary stick; it must be deeply significant, storied.

"What is it?" I asked the missionary.

"A Tooverstaf," he said. "Magic wand. Toenggal Panaloen in Batak. Supposed to strike terror in the ranks of an attacking army; bring drought to the foe, and rain and prosperity to one's own country."

"A useful stick," I said. 'I own some land in

the Imperial Valley in California." Of course he did not understand the joke, so I explained. He laughed, but refused to negotiate for me. I pulled out my most valuable possession, an Ingersoll watch, and offered it to the Priester King's son.

From the pocket of the belt which held his sarong he drew another. It had been given him for good behaviour in prison. He had not caught my drift.

Next I wrote my name in my note book, tore out the leaf, and handed it to him. I could have made no better offer, for the Batak believes that in having a bit of a man's writing, he has also a bit of his soul. The wand was mine.

This is the story of the making of the wand as given by a missionary, Meerwaldt, who had delved deep in Batak customs

The staff was cut from a tree, carefully selected by a sorcerer. It had to be of hard wood, and thorny, proving itself inhabited by an especially vicious spirit. The sacrifice of a rooster, a horse or an enemy was a part of the ceremony attending the felling of the tree. The whole clan helped in the carving of the staff, a task consuming months, for there were no tools except crude knives. When this work was done, the staff had still to be made effective, and to that end was rubbed with an ointment of hideous preparation.

A slave boy, about twelve years old, was buried up to his neck in the bosch outside the kampong. r days he was fed on rice, and rice meal cakes, eppered In his terrible thirst, his body

swelled. On the fourth day came the Radja and other great ones of the kampong, and demanded that he pronounce a blessing on them. So long as he refused he was forced to eat more food. Behind him, lead is being melted. When, finally, his resistance failed, he spoke the required words: "My ghost shall ever protect you." Instantly his head was thrown back, and the moulten lead poured into his mouth. After his slow, terrible death, the body was dug out, and the organs of the soul—that is the brains, heart and liver—were removed, cleaned of blood, hashed fine and cooked. Mixed with lime they were made into a salve called Poepoek. This was put away in jars, and, rubbed on wands, gave them magic power.

A runner brought word that the meeting under the tree was over, and that the official was waiting. "Hipass Baymay," the missionary said, and I echoed the words. The Bataks answered, "Hipass Baymay." It was so that we wished each other "God bless you; good-bye."

My last memory of that amazing day is of another gathering under a tree. It had nothing to do with diplomacy. I, grasping my magic wand for whatever help it might give me, addressed the group in my first sermon. Probably it will be my last. It happened in this way.

The official and I watched the sun set; then we started back toward the lake. The missionary had disappeared. So had the crowd from the Lowlands. We found them assembled at a point down the road.

A chair and tables in front of the inevitable semi-circle told the whole story. Steingraeber had not been able to resist the temptation to arrange an open-air service. I must address the crowd, he told me.

"But I can't preach," I said

"No matter," he urged. "Just a word" And my talk was little more.

"I bring you greetings of goodwill from America," I said in Dutch. The words were translated into Batak, and caused instant excitement. America in these parts means much rice, tobacco, calico. No doubt they thought I came from a kampong paved with gold I might as well have been in Europe. Two of my listeners withdrew in what seemed to me an important conference with the missionary. He shook his head, but when I asked him what it was all about, he told me.

"An organ. They have asked me to ask the Tuan to give them an organ for their church."

It was a bit of a shock. Just a year before I had heard the purchase of an organ discussed. That, too, had been in the hills, among high trees, for it was in the Bohemian grove in Sonoma county in California, during the jinks of the Bohemian club. The price mentioned was forty thousand dollars.

"Couldn't I compromise on a Victrola?" I asked.

The missionary laughed. "They want a harmonium; not a pipe organ. At most it will cost forty guilders."

After that, we sang. Two converts started their favourite hymn—startling to my ears. The music

was unmistakably that of the Battle Hymn of the Republic.

"It is the tune of one of our patriotic songs," I told the missionary.

"Words, too," he answered, and turned in the hymn-book to that famous song, translated into Dutch and again into Batak.

The sun had gone down, and darkness settled. Our only light was from cocoanut torches They threw a flickering light over broad, dark faces while we all stood singing

"John Brown stierf vor de vryheid van den Slaaf," boomed the Dutch official.

"Nungadjum pang muse ari pesti I," sang the congregation.

And I brought up in the rear with, "John Brown's body lies amouldering in the grave."

CHAPTER XI.

CUSTOM AND LAW AMONG THE TOBA BATAKS

After our visit to the haunt of the Priester King, I talked with my missionary friend about the ukum of cannibalism. "What, for instance, had been stolen by the missionaries who were eaten so long ago?" I asked.

"Their religion, I suppose the Bataks would say," my friend answered, and proved a sense of humour and an understanding which must go far in helping his work along.

Ukum and adat—the words are constantly on one's tongue when speaking of the life of the natives in Sumatra. Ukum is their procedure of justice; adat is established custom; both are inextricably interwoven with their religion—the strange animistic faith which has points in common with the faith of many primitive tribes, our own American Indians among them. In all of these religions we find the same grappling to connect natural phenomena with human existence; the same effort to account for the great mysteries—life and death, pain and misfortune. The Batak's faith is one of constant dread, and of harrowing fear Every rock, every tree, every bit of water is the abode of a spirit—a spirit which must

be placated, and kept from dealing harm. Every hill is demon haunted. Small wonder that the face of the Batak is heavy, sodden with dull fear.

References to these superstitions are constant in conversation, and one cannot be with the natives without seeing them hourly in terror of some broken adat. True all over Sumatra, this is especially true in Bataklaad, where adat is most primitive and most powerful. The Batak Institute of the University of Leyden in Holland is doing a serious work in collecting data, and the stranger in Batakland soon falls into line, and begins to formulate for himself a few of the superstitions.

As with us, soul and ghost differentiated. Soul is the spirit in the living body; ghost is the spirit of the dead But the soul may leave the body while one is yet alive; it so leaves during sleep Therefore it is not well to waken a sleeper for his soul may not yet be ready to return from the tree or rock or river where it has gone And when one wakes with a headache, then it is certain that the soul had not yet returned.

The ghost enters tree, and water, and rock, and there is all-powerful. No Batak ever climbs to the top of a mountain for fear of offending the ghost who dwells there. Bad spirits cause the winds, and use them for a conveyance. The wild storms on Lake Toba, which result in many deaths each year, are all caused by the ghosts of that sacred lake. The Priester King was both a spirit of the mountains and water, and a spirit dwelling in flesh and blood.

Though every tree is the habitation of a spirit, some, usually tamarinds, are held sacred. Always they are in some way distinct from the trees about; either they are taller, or a little apart. It was under such a tree that the water rights convention at Bakkara was held. Another such tree overshadowed the grave of the last Priester King

Something of the feeling of the natives for these trees was captured in a short story by a Dutch writer, Kooji van Zeggelen, that I have read.

A steam trolley was projected for the service of a sugar factory, and a sacred tree stood in the way of it. None in the kampong would cut it down To fell it would bring disaster to the village. Was not the tree a protector? Was it not holy?

Finally there was found an old man who was in such dire need of money that he consented. It was old Ali whose daughter used to sell the flowers which, on feast days, were laid at the foot of the tree. But when he approached·

" The sacred tree stood like an old giant; hands up, head in the air, feet deep in the ground. It stood as if all its foliage were imploring, as if its branches implored, as if its whole enormous trunk implored The sacred tree stood on watch. No light did it get from the setting sun, which had gone on its way behind the mountains. Dark and lonely he stood on watch until the gold had disappeared from the sky, and the mountains had become grey. Until night came."

Then old Ali found courage to wield his axe. The tree fell, and buried him beneath it.

Fortunately there are simple ways of diverting the wrath of the spirits. When in the evening the wind begins to blow hard, the Batak mother ties a palm leaf to the handle of the tall rice crusher, which, being the most important tool, is always kept in the house Somehow this weighs down the ghost, and he may not ride the winds. Or she twists old rags into a rope, dips it in cocoanut oil and lights it. The torch produces a stench so horrible it might well discourage any ghost from entering that particular hut.

Water thrown too hard through a shutter is likely to cause havoc by hitting a spirit hovering near. Instantly the offender takes a little water and lets it trickle gently through to show that no harm was intended

Rain when the sun is shining is ghost rain. If the rainbow turns into equal parts of red and yellow many malign spirits are abroad, and every placating act known to the Batak is instantly put into use. And we who smile at these superstitions forget that another faith accepted the rainbow as a bow of promise, which also was a poetic interpretation.

A connection easy to trace lies between the habit of knocking on wood when we mention continued good health or good fortune, and the fact that one may not speak in admiring terms of anything that is dear to the Batak The word for baby means

"unspeakably dirty pig," which carries no offence of boasting to the spirit who is listening.

To keep the friendship of spirits, and to outwit them in their malign intentions it is necessary to begin with the first moment of life. The newly-born baby is not put in a cradle, or made comfortable alongside its mother on the mat. Both mother and child are placed on a hard bamboo bench, under which smoulders an evil smelling fire. It is kept going for seven days, and is done for purification. "All is well over the fire," says the proud Batak father.

After seven days the child's mouth is cleaned with a mixture of honey and lemon, swabbed about with a chicken feather, and the first bath is given. "How old is the child," I asked a Batak father. "My son is off the fire," he answered It is the way of reckoning age; not by time, but by development. "My child can chase the chickens," and you know that he no longer creeps. "My daughter wears a sarong." She is no longer a child, going about naked, she is, therefore, about ten.

I discovered many adats by breaking them. For example, I stepped across a fish net that some girls were mending in a kampong. There was great consternation; a water spirit had been offended. One may not, it seems, step over a body, nor over tools of any kind My most serious offence against adat was committed innocently on the day that I visited Bakkara. While the missionary was engaged with the runner who had come to summon us from

the haunt of the Priester King, I noticed that the narrow way out of the kampong was blocked by some cattle, and climbed a hill to see whether there might not be another way out. From that height I looked down on a pool filled with women bathers. Old and young had dropped their sarongs on the bank and were paddling in the cool water. Before I had looked away from the scene of these savage water nymphs, one of them saw me, gave a warning, and they all screamed. Their manifest fright showed that it was something more than outraged modesty. The missionary told me that I could have committed no greater offence than to have stumbled upon this scene. That here was a case where ukum followed swift on broken adat, and that the punishment was great.

Cannibalism, one judges, was both adat and ukum. I heard stories of the definite ritual of killing of the man who was to be eaten His hands were tied behind his back, and one thrust of a spear under the left arm reached his heart. This was the business of a village headman. Then his neck was cut through with a parang; a work that anyone might do The Radja had the privilege of selecting the choicest bits—the cheek, the palm, the thumb. All must be eaten in a day, nothing saved. Whatever was left was buried. The skull, bones of the hand, and some of the large bones were smoked and saved as trophies, hung under the rafters

It is sometimes difficult to know where adat ends and ukum begins. For example, there is the

comparative value of boys and girls. "May you have seventeen daughters and thirteen sons" is the Batak wish to the bride. This is for two reasons. The Batak girl does practically all the work, and besides, she has a definite money value when the time comes for marriage. For this useful bit of merchandise the prospective husband must pay a sum that ranges anywhere from twenty five to five hundred dollars if turned into U S. money. The father or brother, as owner of the girl, gets the greater part of this sum, but other relatives, and the chief of the kampong come in for a share. The Radja performs the ceremony, telling the young couple simply·

"If the husband dies he will be replaced by the next of kin, who is a bachelor

"If the wife dies, she will be replaced by the younger sister.

"Therefore love each other, and get on together. If you can't get along at all times, mend that which is torn. Do not quarrel among yourselves, or with your father in-law. If anything happens that you do not like, act as though you did not see it, nor hear it Be courteous toward your relatives. Be fertile, and get children, with whom you grow old together."

Then bride and groom eat from one plate, sit on one mat, and permit themselves to be wrapped in it.

Divorce is as simple, and of frequent occurrence. The husband sends away the wife if he grows tired. His purchase money is returned after the discarded

wife has married someone else If, however, the wife runs away from the husband, her father is obliged to give to the husband about twice the sum of the original purchase money. Nowhere in the world more than in Batakland is woman merchandise over which man has disposition. Adultery is punished by instant death to both. "Pig in rice field" it is called, it being ukum to kill a pig when caught in a sawah. Polygamy is permitted, but as elsewhere, only the rich can practise it.

Though the ritual of marriage is formally observed when two Bataks marry, the European who wishes one of these girls for wife, temporary or permanent, follows the custom that he uses with the natives in many parts of the island. He sends his hat and walking stick to the girl's parents. This is enough A marriage has been arranged. Divorce is even simpler He merely sends her packing

An important factor in the success of the Dutch in colonisation is the deep study they make of native psychology; a thing that representatives of other nations entering the islands either for political or commercial reasons would do well to emulate. In the training for colonial service that is given the young Hollander the matter of respect for adat and ukum is stressed. So far as may be the natives are permitted to manage their own affairs. But now and then a case arises when the government must interfere. I was present at a trial for murder when

Dutch law was administered by Dutch officials. The only evidence of native authority was the presence of a few chiefs who occupied seats of courtesy, alongside the Controlleur and his assistants. The trial was for murder. The Radja of a district in the hills back of Balige had died; two men had claimed the right of succession. One, with his relatives, had simplified matters by taking ukum in his own hands and putting the claimant out of the way At least, the claimant had died in suspicious circumstances, and his rival was suspected

The trial was held in the district where the crime had been committed, which entailed for us a two hours' motor ride into the hills back of Balige before we came to an open field bordered by trees. At one side of the field, which gave a suggestion of polo grounds, was a wooden shack flying the Dutch flag; this was the court house. Out in front the two suspects were chained, each to a tree. On the other side of the field were gathered thousands of Bataks who had come from their distant kampongs in hills, and canyons, and lake shore. They sat and crouched on the grass, in the inevitable semi-circle, stolidly and silently awaiting the outcome of this trial which was probably the most sensational that had ever touched their lives. This was not ukum . . . a thing to be dealt with in their own summary way. The white governing people had taken it up, and so it was a thing of especial significance. All day they sat in silence, smoking, and chewing their betel. I, walking among them,

AN ACCUSED BATAK CHIEF AWAITING TRIAL FOR MURDER *(Chief in centre of background Group)*

COURTHOUSE IN WHICH TRIAL WAS HELD

and observing, found them far more interesting than the scene within the court-room.

One might have expected a similarity between this crowd, and a scene in the Southern mountains of the United States when law takes a hand in a mountaineer's feud, but those scenes came to my mind only by way of contrast I have been witness, too, of large gatherings in public squares outside of stately palaces of justice waiting all night for a verdict—who, that saw it, will ever forget St George's Hall in Liverpool on the night that Mrs Maybrick was tried?—but never have I been so impressed as by this silent, breathless waiting of the thousands of savages for the meting out of justice to one of their own kind, by the representatives of a highly civilised nation, and under the laws of that nation.

The verdict? I have forgotten. But I shall never forget the crowd who waited all that day, and probably the night and the next day through to see the working out of the strange new law, which was taking the place of ukum.

If the work of government officials brings frequent contact with adat and ukum, the work of the missionary holds little else. Whatever bias for or against foreign missions one brings to Sumatra, one swiftly realises the strength of purpose of the missionaries and the excellent work that has been done.

The history of foreign missions in Sumatra goes

back to 1834 In that year America's first contribution of workers, Munson and Lyman of the Boston Mission, were killed and eaten. Another man, Mr Ennis was sent out, but the Dutch government did not encourage the work, and nothing came of it. Holland herself then established missions, but the work that has been done in Sumatra has been chiefly accomplished by the Rhenish Mission from Barmen, which was sanctioned by Holland in 1861, and has worked shoulder to shoulder with the Dutch soldiery. Their great service is not in the matter of religion, for though they now proudly claim one hundred and thirty thousand Christianised Bataks, that means little. The religion of any people is the outgrowth of racial characteristics. Into the new faith the savage must bring his old superstitions, and graft them on to the new not understanding either. And if, as frequently happens, the Batak embraces Christianity because he observes that the Christianised Batak does not work on one day a week, perhaps that is reason enough. Religion should make for happiness, and even so small a gleam as that may be worth while.

The real work of the missionary, here as in other places, is in bringing a bit of training, a bit of life illumination which is a gradual working toward civilisation. This is the kind of work which is being done in the mission schools which one finds occasionally in the kampongs And, for shining example, it is the kind of work that is done in the Industrial School of the Rhenish Mission which one

reaches by half an hour's horseback ride out of Balige It is a substantial community house, with shops for furniture making, bookbinding, printing, class-rooms, and—this especially—sleeping quarters with baths. The whole establishment gives evidence of the adaptability of the Batak for all kinds of handcraft—every bit of the work was done by natives under the direction of two missionaries Here is published the Batak Mission paper in the Batak language, and all other printed matter used by the missions The difficulty is to get pupils. Not more than twenty boys were at work there on the day that I visited the establishment.

I have deep admiration for the people who are doing this work; for the men, and especially for the women. It takes a splendid steadfastness, a high order of courage to undertake the hardships and the deprivations and isolation from one's kind that are essential to the life of a missionary. And the women, who must suffer more than the men from the loneliness and the hardships, seem never to fail in that steadfastness and courage.

CHAPTER XII

THE TAPANOELI RESIDENCY

In the highlands back of Balige, I saw the Toba country at its wildest. I rode with an official out on inspection of dams, roads, and kampongs, and for miles we spun along the highway without catching a glimpse of human life. Yet all about us were kampongs, hidden among trees or in rocky canyons. We passed bare mountains and sandy ridges, and nooks where, tradition said, old battles had been fought, and the captured enemy killed and eaten before the victorious men took to their war prahus and rowed home across the lake.

But in the kampongs themselves when we left the highway to hunt them out we found no suggestion of a glorious and picturesque old savagery. There were stolidity and filth, and the mute misery that comes from lack of understanding. With the dogs and pigs always under the house there is no need for garbage can nor sewerage. The animals which this food fattens become food for the natives. Sometimes a pathetic faith in the white-man is shown Once while I waited outside a kampong, an old man thrust into my arms a child that was suffering from a terrible disease. Evidently he thought that

I could do something, though he was helpless. As we looked at each other across the naked body of that pain-racked child I felt the tie between all people, which makes language unnecessary.

Taroetoeng, in the beautiful and rich Si Lindoeng valley was the last town at which I tarried in Batakland. Rice fields and palm groves flourish in tropic bounty the length and breadth of the valley. The highway follows the course of a large river, and from it the view is one of utter loveliness. I did not have this highway to myself. As I neared Taroetoeng so also did the natives from kampongs for miles around, for it was Friday, Pasar day, when only the old and decrepit stay at home. Single file they came into the road, entering from tree hidden paths on the hill-sides. I must have passed thousands—men and women and children. The women were the burden bearers On their heads were baskets, or Standard oil cans, filled with the wares to be offered for sale in the Pasar. A few a very few—men departed from the tribal custom of letting the women do the work. Apparently these dissenting men were all butchers, for they carried only animals. One pair that tempted my camera walked single file with a bamboo pole between them; from the pole dangled a suckling pig, protected from the sun by a wrapping of palm leaves.

Later in the day I saw all these people again. I climbed the stairs leading to the market sheds in Taroetoeng and found them with their wares spread

out on mats or on the ground. Pottery, matches, pins, needles, the fabric that is woven by the Batak women—all spread in tempting array. Behind each display squatted women who, between sales, drank tea and talked and tended their babies. Some of the babies sprawled on the ground, others were bound on their mothers' backs.

For the most part the men stood or squatted in groups, talking, smoking, chewing betel. For them Pasar day is a social occasion. But when I found a large group assembled in one place, I discovered it was that most interesting, because most gruesome spot in a native Pasar—the dog market. Now dog meat is a delicacy among the Bataks, and more to be desired than the flesh of any other animal. Therefore, to prove that no fraud was being done, each vendor held above his display the head of the dog that had been slaughtered.

After this sight I felt the need of a drink I had that morning discovered. I had seen a native scale an aren palm, and take down a bamboo receptacle which, fastened under a hole pierced in the palm's bark, had caught the trickling sap. This palm wine is most delicious, and so powerful that by comparison, California's Grappa or Jackass Brandy, Maine's Setting Hen, Honolulu's O-Kuli How, and Bangkok's Shamshew seem soft drinks. The strongest of ropes are made from the fibre of the aren palm, but they cannot, I am sure, be so strong as the liquor the tree yields.

DOG BUTCHERS OF BATAKLAND SUMATRA

I did not linger long at Taroetoeng. Djok and I, with the Malay chauffeur and his Batak helper, were soon speeding westward on the broad highway that crosses Sumatra. Fort de Kock was my next objective. I did not plan to stop at Siboga, for I had been spoiled for the discomforts of tropic sea-level air by my stay in altitudes that ranged from two thousand to four thousand feet, and my nightly rest under a blanket.

Huge, bare, granite rocks lined the highway. I crossed river after river. This section is rugged and picturesque, and with little cultivation. When at lunch time I reached the Bonan Dolok rest-house, and from an altitude of one thousand seven hundred feet looked down on the blue water of Tapanoeli Bay, I realised that though Siboga might be hot and uncomfortable, for beauty of setting it was a very Naples, and might not be passed by. A sharp drop down a zigzag road brought me to the little city. My apprehensions had been useless. A good hotel and an intensive drainage system have worked wonders, and my short stay was passed in comparative physical comfort.

Interesting craft lay in the harbour. There was a Royal Mail Packet steamer, just in from Nias Island, and a pandjalang, an outrigger boat, forty-five feet by ten feet, in from Barocs on the north, with a cargo of camphor and with passengers. Barocs is inhabited by the bloodthirsty Pakpak Bataks. Some were among the passengers and

they eyed with manifest interest the white man sitting on the wharf dangling his legs. I returned the interested staring

The water tempted me. Now Siboga—(or Sibolga; it is a word of many spellings) means crocodile, and Tapanoeli means fine bathing beach; these terms are contradictory in suggestion unless one concludes that the bay was made from the reptile's point of view In any event, I decided that my acquaintance with the blue water should be made in a boat. Among the small craft that littered the harbour were two motor launches. One of them belonged to the steamer. The other, I learned on inquiry, belonged to the richest man in town—a Chinese of course—Lim Kin Chai, who used the launch to ply between port and his lumber camp and sawmill on one of the islands. The motor boats, then, were not out to be hired. While I was making up my mind to content myself with a less modern boat for my cruise, Djok disappeared, and as suddenly came back with the word that Lim Kin Chai's launch, with a crew of Malay boys, were at my service for the afternoon.

The amazing Chinese What did it matter that Djok had lied to me about his English, and sundry other matters. His relatives in China belonged to the same secret society to which Lim Kin Chai belonged. On the strength of this he had hunted the rich man up, and secured the favour for me.

All afternoon we cruised about the bay, and among the islets, green with luxuriant vegetation.

POTTERY MAKING IN ALANGUDI

They were Labu Labu Kechil, and Labu Labu Besar, meaning respectively, Little Pumpkin and Big Pumpkin. These, with several other rocks, are named for their appearance.

On our return, I was summoned for tea with Lim Kin Chai. Djok led me to Siboga's general store, owned by Lim Kin Chai's son. There the old man awaited me, with tea already set out on the window ledge.

He knew a little Malay. When that failed he swung into Chinese which Djok turned into Malay for me. It was a maddeningly devious way to get the old man's interesting talk. For more than fifty years he had lived on the west Sumatra coast. In that time he had become Besar Boss, the importer of all Chinese labour into Tapanoeli, as well as the holder of huge lumber concessions. He had much to tell.

His fifty years' stretch of memory covered the regime of the last Priester King, and the coming of some of the early missions. Yet more romantic, it covered the days of piracy and slave trade. Though the pirates confined their efforts chiefly to the islands of Nias and Mentawei, sometimes their war prahus would sail all around Sumatra, picking up slaves and booty wherever they could. Perhaps his own start had been made that way In any event, his had been an adventurous life, and—after the manner of old adventurers—he had become conservative. He is a staunch and useful supporter of Dutch rule.

He had, he said, educated the Bataks up to wants, and therefore to work, and had introduced money instead of their barter system, whereby a man having salt, and needing a sarong, would find a man whose needs were opposite, and was willing to make the change. Lim Kin Chai had given them credits for work. The IOU was a strip of bark or a cord, with knots tied to it, each knot representing a dollar mex. Lim Kin Chai's activity is by no means a thing of the past Interested in the oil lands, he showed disappointment that I could give him no information about what America would do in the Djambi district.

Evening at the rest-house brought different contrasts. There were three Catholic priests, long-bearded, down from a mission in the interior. There were young Hollanders and their wives having an evening of gaiety in town.

And with the resident official I had a long talk, one detail of which may be interesting to those who, like myself, have been baffled by the infinite variety in Malay spelling.

" This town's name—how should one spell it? " I asked " Is it S-i-b-o-l g-a? Or S i B o l-g-a? Or S-i-b-o-g-a? Or what? "

" I spell it S i-b-o-g a," said the Resident. That settled the question for me

CHAPTER XIII

THE PADANG HIGHLANDS, UTOPIA OF FEMINISTS

FROM Siboga I turned inland again, bound for the Padang Highlands—a country of mountains and volcanoes, active and extinct. Country, too, of the Menangkabau Malays with their matriarchal system of family and community life

My approach was made in the best possible way to learn a country intimately I walked At the beginning this was accident rather than good judgment, I merely tramped ahead of the stalled auto but soon became so enamoured of this near, slow view of the region that I determined to make on foot all the distance to Fort de Kock, the chief city of the Highlands. Between Taroetoeng and Siboga there had been a steady thinning of Bataks Now they had disappeared altogether, the section was typically Malay. Settlements were built in the open, with no barricades of trees or rocks between them and a possible enemy. Cultivated fields indicated enough industry to support the life of the natives, but there were no European establishments So far as safety went, I felt no more apprehension than if I had been hiking alone in America, or in any country in Europe. Considering how recently a

trip across Sumatra would have been attended with danger of attack both from natives and animals, one realises that the clock of the world moves fast indeed.

At one point in the road my coming caused a slight commotion. A song in a mezzo soprano voice came from out a clump of beachwood palm trees, and I stopped to listen. The song also stopped. Then I heard a crackling of brush, and two young girls scurried across the road, and away toward a little settlement across a field. I sent Djok in pursuit, for the machine had overtaken me. I wanted to hear that song again. The promise of an auto ride and a Batak shawl overcame their timidity, and in a moment they were before me, repeating the song. In the liquid Malay, the words had a suggestion of great beauty, but when, laboriously, I turned them into English, I found they were a diagnosis of a universal ailment.

> "If you look into your sweetheart's eyes daily,
> You cannot put a stop to the worry of love.
> Every resistance flounders sadly.
> Crazier you get with every morn"

I do not set this down as an important addition to the love lyrics of the world, but it was amusing to hear in such surroundings.

The Kota Nopan rest-house sheltered me for the night When in the morning I started to tramp on, I wore a sweater for the first time in months. A raincoat would have been more to the point, I soon discovered, for a downpour came with tropic sudden-

ness and violence, and sent me hurrying in quest of banana leaves with which to improvise protection, as I had seen natives do. One of the big palm leaves at the back and one at the front helped some. No doubt they would have been adequate in a drizzle, but in a real storm they proved to me merely cobwebs, and I was glad to take shelter in a native hut. But by and by the sun came out, and in spite of steaming clothes I tramped on. The road wound through scenes of great variety. There were rivers with many waterfalls, high wooded mountains, clefts and gaps in the rocks, straight stretches over high flats, treeless, but with tall grass, then a drop into a valley with palm and rubber plantations, and terraced rice fields. And here and there I came upon little communities, settlements of strange-looking houses with many saddle-shaped gables unlike anything that I had seen elsewhere in Sumatra.

In my walk there had been much climbing, for Fort de Kock lies twenty-eight hundred feet above the sea. Government offices, military garrisons, and a couple of hotels indicate the importance of the little city from the standpoint of the colonial government. There are villas, too, of some of the more fortunate of the residents of Padang, the busy, sweltering sea port fifty miles away. In so strange a land one does not look to find kin, yet I was welcomed by a cousin who is one of the several retired business men who prefer life in the quaint, tropic mountain city to the complicated conditions

of Europe I could readily understand. I fell at once under the spell of Fort de Kock.

But every other interest and charm of life here must, with the newcomer, rank below contact with the Menangkabau Malays. No amount of fore knowledge of what to expect takes away the zest—not to say shock of being in a matriarchat, and of seeing with one's own eyes a social system wherein women are all powerful, and men are mere drones in the hive; fifth wheels in the coach in every matter except the one of fathering the tribe. That is an important service, of course, but there is no denying that a near view of a matriarchal country is a hard blow to man's self esteem.

Though I had caught fleeting glimpses from the roadside my first view of these people in large numbers was on Pasar Day, which brings about thirty thousand Menangkabauers from their villages into Fort de Kock From my window in the club I watched in the early morning, many women going through the streets, and climbing the broad stairs that lead up to the market place. Most were in white, a long skirt and a jacket, with a broad scarf-like shawl about their hips. And every woman of them carried on her head a basket containing the ware she had brought for sale. They were picturesque and graceful, majestic too, oddly, when one remembers the short stature of most Malays I lost no time myself in climbing the stairs, and going here and there examining the bits of hand wrought gold and silver, the lace and fabric that come out of

the busy villages. Not that my attention was confined to the wares for sale; the human element in this Pasar was far too interesting to allow that to be possible. There was one girl, I remember, over whose exhibit of lace I offered bits of Malay in exchange for her floods of it, whose beauty almost convinced me that a long, long stay in Fort de Kock might be a delightful experience, even with the handicap of the matriarchal system.

Every aspect and custom of these people set the Menangkabauers apart from the coast Malays. A legend accounting for their curious name, which means Winning Buffalo, runs something like this:

Toward the end of the thirteenth century, a young king from Mecca ruled over this part of Sumatra There was constant strife between him and the Modjopohit of Java, who claimed as a part of his great Hindu empire the young king's domain. To settle the matter once for all, a great army of men and buffaloes was sent into the Highlands. But on the eve of the battle the leaders of the two armies met, and agreed to withhold their men and save slaughter, but to leave the combat to two buffaloes, pitted against each other. For their champion, the Javanese chose the most powerful war buffalo. The canny Highlanders chose a calf kabau, starved it for days, and on the morning fixed for combat, fastened a sharp iron spike to its nose and turned it loose. Frenzied with hunger the young buffalo rushed at its adversary and ripped open its belly with the spike. Whether the Javanese were satisfied

with the fairness of this, or whether they believed it would be useless to try to compete in wits with the Highlanders, the legend does not say, but the Menangkabauers kept their independence.

It is the matriarchat which marks the greatest difference between the Menangkabau Malays and all other tribes in Sumatra, except a few in the Atjeh's and in Djambi, where the system still prevails. It is a survival of the old group or community marriage, common enough at the time of the important buffalo fight. The marvel is that it should have lasted down the centuries, through contact with other peoples, and through the Mohammedan faith, which certainly nowhere else attaches undue importance to woman's place in the scheme of things. Under these old group marriages it was impossible to determine the father of a child, and since there could be no doubt about the mother, so the child belonged to her as naturally as the chick belongs to the hen. Like all primitive marriage, this system took no account of a possible affection between father and child. It shows, indeed, how late a development paternal affection is in human relations, and that it, like romantic love between men and women, is one of the inexplicable flowers of evolution and civilisation.

All this is comprehensible enough when read in the pages of a book on primitive marriage, but is startling when, in its practical workings out, it falls under one's observation. Really, to know the system, one should, I suppose, adopt the method of

those enterprising sociologists who put off sables and diamonds and take jobs in pickle factories; or leave college chairs to take to the road and join the ranks of unskilled workers. But I did not wish to go quite so thoroughly into the system, I merely gleaned as best I could from conversation and contact, and as close observation of the sokoes as is permitted a man and a foreigner.

I have spoken of the houses with their many gilded gables These saddle-shaped gables are significant of far more than the buffaloes' horns they symbolise. They show how many families, incorporated into one great family under the domination of the matriarch, "Indoea," live in the house. The house belongs to the Indoea In the beginning it had only one gable; there she lived and was visited by her husband, taking her turn among his wives. When her boy children reached the age of eight they were sent away to live in the men's quarters, but the girls stayed on When the eldest reached marriageable age, her mother bought for her a husband, or rather a part of a husband, since the young man chosen either already has or will have other wives. A new gable is added to the right of the main gable; this is the home of the married daughter. When the second daughter is married a gable at the left is added, and so on until all the daughters are married. Since Menangkabau families are large, these houses attain great length. Some of them are mansions with coloured roofs and elaborate, mirror-set carvings and black and red arabesques in

the gilded gables. Colourful, picturesque dwellings they are, shining in the green trees along the roadside. The homes of the poor are simpler, but built after the same model. The Menangkabau Malays are, however, a rich people, especially since the war-time prices for rice have put them in the profiteer class.

Besides the one big house, the "roemah gadang," there is a council house, the little family mosque, the padi barn, the guest house, and, of late years, a school house A short distance away stands the servants' house, that for the men and for boys over eight. These last are all built without gables. All of these buildings together form a sokoe. Families of the same tribe are prone to congregate, so it frequently happens that there are two or more sokoes together, forming a village. But each sokoe has its Indoea, through which name and inheritance are traced. She dominates her household. When she dies, her oldest daughter inherits the title, the privileges, and the responsibilities of the Indoea. Should the girl be too young to undertake this responsibility, her mother's eldest sister serves temporarily as a sort of Indoea regent. The matriarch's eldest brother has also, through his relationship, a bit of recognition. He is called Mamak, male chief, and on rare occasions acts as councillor. But since all money, land, and other possessions are the property of the women, and Menangkabau estates are kept intact, his position is really one of honour, not of rights. On his death

RICE BARN, PADANG HIGHLANDS, SUMATRA

his eldest nephew assumes his title and lack of responsibilities.

The women do all the work. I saw them at work in the rice fields and tobacco lands, in their dark calico skirts and jackets; their heads covered with a Toedocang—a cone-shaped bonnet made of bamboo leaf or of pandamus leaves. And I saw them hard at work repairing the houses with good workmanlike strokes. I was told that when a new addition is to be made the Mamak is called in. It would have been a pleasure to have seen one so engaged, but it was a pleasure denied me The strenuous life of these women does not rob them of their love of ornament Not all of their gold and silver ear rings and bracelets, nor coloured embroideries are taken into town to be sold They decorate themselves lavishly, and the jewellery becomes them well. Besides their skirt and jacket, many of them have always at hand a long narrow piece of woven shawl, a salandang, which serves many purposes, either to cover the head or the bosom, or to carry babies in while the mothers go their busy ways.

The stranger in the Menangkabau country must be a more or less baffled observer, but opportunities for observation and interesting contacts are never lacking. A drive out from Fort de Kock past a large district of sokoes brought me one day to a public meeting held in a cleared space among trees. Two hundred women or more had assembled and were in conference with a Dutch official about some

question of Menangkabau law and its relation to the new order. The question under discussion was Greek to me, but the picture of that district council, every representation a woman, is one that lingers in memory.

Another day, when swinging along the road, I fell in with a Mamak who invited me to have a cocoanut with him at his home. He was wonderful to look upon, dressed Arab-Malay fashion, with a loin scarf over coloured pantaloons, a jacket and an Arab turban. In one hand he carried a gold topped cane, in the other was a gilt bird cage, imprisoning a pigeon. I accepted the invitation with alacrity. His house proved to be a small one apart from the other men's quarters, proving that his wives were prosperous enough to maintain him in luxury. Other men came. Some were dressed in white European clothes, others wore a combination of European and Arabian dress. There was much talk of pigeon fights and races. And their frequent bursts of laughter indicated that many jokes were being cracked; jokes which I could not follow except when an old Mamak who spoke Dutch translated for me. One needs the idiom of a language to get the humorous points.

Obviously this was a typical afternoon of the Menangkabauer husband who has nothing to do but be a husband. Four is his usual allotment of wives; he is sold to each of them. The price of a man of twenty ranges, I was told, from two hundred to four hundred guilders, making a hundred dollars an

average price for a promising young man. The fact that he has been sold before, and will be sold again and again and again in no wise affects his value in the matrimonial market.

I felt that I must do something for the entertainment of my host and his guests, so I took out my dice and introduced craps. Though Islam frowns on gambling, the game was welcomed, and was only broken up when a messenger—a girl, of course—came to summon one of the Mamaks to his sister's sokoe. It seemed that a council was under way. He got up with manifest reluctance, and went.

His going ended the party The Dutch speaking Mamak bundled me into his motor-car and took me into town. On the way he talked freely, and I gathered that he was very tired of the matriarchat, and would gladly try another system of family organisation A "restless sex" is developing in the Padang Highlands. Some of the young men are leaving the sokoes for Fort de Kock, and there are breaking into business life just as the women of our social system began to do years ago. But many of these who come away remain staunch in the belief of the rightness of the matriarchat. I have in mind a long talk with a young Menangkabauer who had been a student in Java, and was preparing to go to the University of Leyden in the Mother Country

He had no desire to remain in the Padang Highlands, and be merely a Menangkabauer husband, but nevertheless maintained that the matriarchal system was better than any other as a working basis for

community life. He could see nothing in my argument that the ideal domestic organisation should give all possible opportunity to both sexes, and that the matriarchat brought degradation to me. Nor could he see that paternal affection and responsibility did exist, even though they were late developments in evolution, and that the possession of children might and should be a joy and an honour to both father and mother

Certainly the matriarchat has developed the women of the Padang Highlands far beyond the men, so far indeed that one wonders whether at the start they were stronger, more highly energised. They are skilled in many crafts; not the least of these is lace making. At the Kota Gadoeng school near Fort de Kock, Menangkabauer girls and women are taught to make as fine and beautiful a lace as ever came out of Brussels.

Engrossing as are the people, they cannot claim all of one's attention while in the Padang Highlands. There were mountains to climb, lakes to sail, miracles of nature to be seen, for here I was close to the volcanoes whose vapours I had sighted when I steamed through the Straits of Malacca. From Mount Merapi's summit, eight thousand six hundred and seventy six feet above the sea, I looked across at the fuming Kocrindje in Djambi, towering eleven thousand four hundred feet, and down to the Indian Ocean.

Another ride took me to beautiful Lake Manindjau. Its twelve by five mile surface lies in the crater

of a volcano. On one side of the lake the high mantle of the volcano still stands, rising twenty-one hundred feet above the rim of the lake. A winding road through rice sawahs leads to the top. There, in addition to the wonders of nature, I found native thrift. A Malay held me up for a small coin before I was allowed to enter the pavilion built by the government for protection from the sun. This was balanced by the good turn served me by a Malay on the other side of the lake There I stood close to the water's edge, for the mantle had crumbled. A small boat lay on the water, and I asked the owner to row me a little distance. I wanted to investigate a certain bubbling of the water that I had observed from the high rim. Out on the lake, the water was hot to my trailing hand. The volcano is not dead. It is not even sound asleep. But this constant bubbling serves for safety valve, and the waters of Lake Manindjau will therefore never be spilled.

Another of these crater lakes is Singkarak. On its borders oranges grow in such abundance that the natives fill the autos of passers-by with the golden fruit The stretch beyond Singkarak leads over barren mountain country to Allahan Pandjang. Not far away are the Oembelin coal mines at Sawah Loento, important in themselves, and significant of the rich mineral country that surrounds them.

"Good country for tigers," we were told by the wife of the Controleur at Allahan Pandjang. She had a baby in her arms, and another tugging at her skirts while she calmly told us of a tiger's visit to her

yard the night before. The animal had carried away a goat.

We had our guns with us, and drove off the main road in the hope of finding some trace, but the only tracks we found were those of an automobile. We soon came on the machine itself—a big limousine, with rear wheels stuck in the mud. We stopped to exchange the news of the road, and found the stalled machine belonged to a party of Japanese, prospecting for gold and other minerals. They were so sure of the occurrence of gold in that section, that they wanted to acquire land—a difficult achievement under the matriarchal system of permanent family possessions. A long lease is the best one can hope for.

The most important event of the year at Fort de Kock is the race meet. How important it was I had not known, and I expressed amazement at the size of the race track and grand stand about six miles out of town.

"Wait and see," my cousin said "Natives from all over the island, and every European who can manage to take a holiday, will be here. There will probably be eighty thousand people; a million guilders will change hands at the Pasar during race week." I did wait and see. Race week happened just before I left Fort de Kock.

The event had its origin in a calamity. Between the years 1866 and 1877 a Rinderpest killed a hundred thousand head of cattle in Sumatra. The

result was an increased use of horses. Stallion stations were established by the government. As a further incentive to production and spur to interest, the racing club at Fort de Kock was formed, with government prizes for the winners. The great numbers of finely bred horses to be seen throughout the island give proof of the success of the plan.

I saw the sights under the guidance of one of my new friends—a lanky chap of aristocratic bearing who had served his government in many parts of the globe, and was, just then, Director of the Opium Régie in the district.

The night before the first of the races he took me to the cross roads, twenty miles out from Fort de Kock. There we watched the crowds assembling Every cross road, every path down the mountain, brought people—on foot and on horseback, in wagons and in autos. It looked like a general migration; every wagon was loaded; every pedestrian carried much. Manifestly this was to be a time of gaiety, with business not forgotten, for the thrifty Indoea was bringing to market the wares of her sokoe.

Thousands of Menangkabauers assembled, and within a few miles of the race-course, made camp for the night. In white clothes, and in vivid colours they sat around their camp fires. There was much laughter, much talk, much eating. So picturesque was the scene, so colourful and romantic, that it seemed impossible this was really an episode of real life and not a picture achieved with infinite pains, infinite art. Vendors of food brought us bowls of

rice and of cocoanut milk. Refreshed, we strolled about And as we strolled jewel-bedecked girls would separate themselves from a group and steal shyly up to my imperturbable companion. No doubt each was thinking she would like to have the Indoea of her sokoe approach him with an offer of marriage for her.

The flickering light of torches revealed a row of shacks arranged in a semi circle. Crowds of men stood about. All sorts of games of chance were under way on the boards in front of these shacks, and it looked as though every Mamak in the High lands would have gambled away his sister's last sawah, had the women not had the foresight to arrange their property system. Betting was high on the pigeon fights.

In town we found gaiety too, but a different gaiety. The hotels were crowded Smartly gowned women sat in the broad verandahs, or were whirled about in dances to the music of the Roumanian orchestra. At one in the morning a gambling room was opened in one of the clubs—a race week custom. Women put up heavy stakes, and passionately watched the white ball as it spun in roulette. Here the European women gambled as excitedly as did the Menangkabauer men about the camp fires.

Next morning a procession of conveyances, every one decorated with the Dutch flag and with bunting, rolled through the narrow palm-lined avenue that leads from Fort de Kock to the race-course. Except for difference in face and dress, race crowds are much

the same, whether the horses are running at Saratoga, Epsom, Longchamps, Shanghai, Calcutta, or Fort de Kock. Always there is the same tense excitement among the spectators; the same order, however different the outward manifestation. In its demonstrations or lack of them—as well as in aspect, the Fort de Kock crowd more nearly resembled the Burmese at Rangoon than any other I have watched.

Notwithstanding my admiration for the splendid Batak ponies, and my zeal in betting long shots on the nose—and for once in my life I quit a winner—I found myself quite willing to turn my back on the race-course, and look over the crowd of spectators. These were people that I had seen at their daily grind, stamping rice, working in the fields, or idling away the days, according as their luck had held in being women or men. It was good to see them now in carnival mood, men and women together, enjoying themselves. Good to see the women jewel-bedecked, and in their best finery.

The scene had a touch of the theatrical. It suggested the assembling of the happy peasants in an operetta just before the fall of a curtain. And for me it was the assembling of all the colour, and the strangeness and the charm of the Menangkabau country.

CHAPTER XIV

AT THE WEST GATE OF SUMATRA

WHAT Medan is to Belawan Deli on the eastern coast, Padang is to Emmahaven, the chief western port of Sumatra The metropolis of the Lowlands is only fifty miles from Fort de Kock, but between the two towns there existed for me a distance that cannot be measured. In Padang the western world began to claim my thoughts again. My greatest interest was no longer in the natives, but in the Europeans.

And this in spite of the fact that native life in Padang is very interesting. A meeting place of the eastern peoples, the town has Indian, Arabian and Chinese quarters as well as the houses of the Malays; each of these quarters has its bazaar, alluring to the eye and tempting to the purse. But there are two thousand European residents of Padang, and these make a community with a gay, hospitable social life suggestive of small towns of the South Atlantic states. As the guest of my friend, the Director of the Opium Régie, I came back to the ways of my own kind. Evenings at the hotel, and ladies' nights at the club were festive occasions. There were

happy evenings, too, at "Ons Genoegen," a club directly on the shore, where half-caste society assembles, and where beautiful dark girls, carefully chaperoned, dance the nights away. A mental comparison of these dancers with those one sees in American ball rooms, was far from favourable to the latter, both in dress and in manner of dancing.

Padang is far less Dutch than Medan, is, indeed, in a manner cosmopolitan, for Emmahaven, on beautiful Koninginnebaai, is on a high road of the sea; many steamers make it a port of call. Even when the passengers do not tarry for a longer visit, they come ashore, motor into Padang, buy picture post cards, and usually visit the sophisticated and over fed monkeys at Apenberg, a hill across the river. Some, more ambitious, motor over for a visit to the cement factory. There is little in the dress of these travellers to differentiate them, for always they are in the white of the tropics; so when out of hearing distance, one judges of nationality by stature and movement, and mannerisms. It is an interesting game.

The Dutch passengers, bound for other ports, are easily separated into classes, even when one has no chance to talk. Some have the tired look that a long sojourn in the tropics brings. These are homeward bound. Others, fresh and vigorous, are manifestly just back from a vacation. I found much interest in watching the children. Some were fair, and flaxen haired, a pure Dutch type. The dark hair

and dark skin of others showed a mingling of the races. The half-caste children seemed always more clever, sturdier, and more naughty than the others and always ready to give a strong battle to their babu (native nurse) who is always a member of these family groups. Royal nurses are some of these babus, with the blood of sultans in their veins.

One day I saw coming through the streets a group of men and women that were so different from any other travellers that they brought me up short in astonishment Their clothes were dark, or coloured. The women wore high heels. Here was Europe; not Europe dressed for the tropics, but Europe as it dresses at home. They are an opera troupe from Vienna, en route to Batavia, and had come ashore for the night to give a performance at the club.

They were kings and queens that night for all Europeans on the west coast of Sumatra. Starved as we were for the kind of entertainment they had to give, it did not matter to us that the month on shipboard had fattened the bodies of these starved Viennese to the destruction of their voices. They were fat How they must have eaten! The lyric soprano's voice broke wide open when she tried to take a high note; and the tenor's had sunk irremediably. But for all that, they sang to delighted listeners, and afterwards we entertained them until, in the dim hours of the morning, we heard the steamer's whistle, summoning them.

The coming and going of so many Europeans

roused in me a desire to be on my way. There was one other place in Sumatra that I wished to visit—the Highlands of Djambi, which have only recently been made accessible by the Dutch Government after much fighting with the mountaineer tribes. The country is rich agriculturally; gold and other minerals have been found there. One of the most interesting adats in all Sumatra prevails among the natives of the region. The dowry of a girl consists of a sawah of at least one acre. For each child a rice patch is set aside at birth; the yield is saved in the husk. The rice is held to be eaten, but never sold, so that, whatever happens, there will never be starvation in the tribe. It was because of this hoarding of rice that the Dutch came in contact with the rich domain. When during the world war the food shortage became acute, the government took matters in hand, overrode the adat, and compelled the natives to sell their rice. More than a million pounds were thus commandeered. Some was found to be the harvest of a hundred years ago; but experiments proved this to be as nutritious as fresh rice, though yellowed.

Natives with so wise an adat would be worth the visiting, I knew. Besides, I wanted to climb Mount Koerintji. I was making ready for my start when, one morning, while we were experimenting with the relative merits of gin, brandy or Scotch in the dilution of cocoanut milk, my host asked me whether I would care to go on a cruise in the Indian Ocean, and visit the small islands with some government

officials. There might be a chance. I hailed the suggestion with enthusiasm. He stepped to the telephone, got Emmahaven, and found that the boat was steaming up. There was no time to lose, I would be off for Nias.

Djambi must wait for my next visit. Anyway, it is a part of my life philosophy to leave something fresh to be done next time; something to come back for.

But whenever that visit may be, I shall find conditions changed; the people in every section will have moved fast along the road of progress. The economic development fostered by the government cannot fail to have that effect. New roads, and new waterways are opening new enterprises. Native textile industries have in these last years taken on new life, encouraged by the government subsidy. The policy must pay the Dutch well in the long run, for at least fifty per cent of the finished goods produced in Holland goes to the Netherland Indies.

Of course there is restlessness among the natives, and here and there resentment of the European. Especially is this true among the Menangkabauers. Their feeling is crystallised in a saying: "The European comes to our country, buys a square yard of ground, and then spreads everywhere, like the pumpkin." But though they are sturdy, and advanced, and the backbone of Sumatra, their dream of independence cannot reach fulfilment. No native leader could bring to unification the heterogeneous

life of the various sokoes. Here, as elsewhere in the Orient, a western nation must direct and use the tremendous native forces And they will be used to good effect. The beautiful, productive island is a land of rare opportunity.

CHAPTER XV

LIGHTING THE WAY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

A CRUISE among the islands of the Indian Ocean with officials of the Dutch Government offered opportunity for fresh experience. It gave a chance to see the oiling of the machinery by which a power maintains sovereignty in a remote possession Better, it gave a chance to glimpse the conditions obtaining in the bits of land, near neighbours to each other, near neighbours to Sumatra, but which present differences in tribe and language and adat of as wide a swing as are to be found in the various sections of Sumatra. Best of all, it gave a chance to visit islands seldom trod by white men; islands romantic in their isolation; romantic in their savagery. I was so eager to be on my way that Djok broke all time records in packing

But the invitation of the Resident to join the Harbour Master of Padang on this tour of lighthouse inspection did not save me from being held up on the gang plank of the *Bellatrix*. Lucas was there to look me over. His report was unfavourable, and from the way he bounded about with sharp teeth bared I knew that he was ready to back his judgment with action if I attempted to pass him. Fortunately

Captain Van der Ham, attracted by the barks, thought better of me; possibly because he had seen the letter from the Gouverneur General of the Dutch East Indies.

"*It's all right, Lucas,*" the captain said. The dog stopped in the middle of a bark, and I was permitted to go on board. A mixed ancestry has Lucas, with a terrier strain predominant. Whatever his background, he has gone over heart and soul to the Dutch Colonial Government, and takes very seriously his self appointed tasks on board the *Bellatrix*. Always the last one on and the first off the trig little government boat, he manifestly feels himself to be its special guard. When he had followed me aboard, the gang plank was pulled up, and in a moment we were moving slowly away, out through the mountain-flanked Koninginnebaai, toward the island-gemmed waters of the Indian Ocean.

We were to visit every island of the Indian Archipelago having a lighthouse built by the Dutch. These islands stretch along the west coast of Sumatra, and are mere dots on the map. The largest, Nias, has an area of only seventy-six square miles, and a population of about one hundred and fifty thousand. Mentawei ranks next, with ten thousand inhabitants. Most of the islands are tiny bits of land, or coral reefs—*adals* in Malay—with a few huts in a cocoanut grove, a stretch of white beach, and a lighthouse. Others have no inhabitants but the Malay keeper of the light, and his family. It was a Polynesian-Malay world that I was entering.

These islands—such of them as are not coral—are probably bits of the sunken continent that, in the fascinating hypothesis of scientists, once bridged the Pacific. Or it may be that the first settlers came adventuring in their prahus out of Asia, and found in the colourful fragments of land the charm that has held many a modern adventurer.

Though contracts with Holland were signed by chiefs as far back as 1669, and the islands were claimed by Raffles for England in 1820, it was not until the middle of the last century that Holland began actual occupation. Rhenish missions were protected. Dutch cruisers patrolled the coast, and stopped slave and pirate trades. A new order began for the savage islands, an order which established contact with the main currents of the world. These bits of land now have a commercial significance. Freight steamers make regular stops at the larger of the islands, taking on copra, cocoanut oil, rice, rattan, areca nuts and spices.

My travelling companions were competent to give a liberal education in colonial service, and in the customs of the people with whom their duties had brought contact. Experience piled on experience, observation added to observation, comparisons drawn between the characteristics and habits of the various tribes, make of their minds storehouses of information. Captain Van der Ham talked as illuminatingly about the natives as he did of monsoons and tidal waves, lighthouses and wharves Under his command during the war the little *Bellatrix* had been

brought from the banks of the Shelde across the world and into these tropical waters, in the total darkness that those dire times required. The harbour-master had been an officer in the war against the Atjehs. These were my constant companions. Then there were officials who came aboard at our various stopping places controlleurs, road masters, police officers, military men, Catholic missionaries, each with a story to tell. Sometimes the tale was of the indictment of a native king for *koppesnellen*—Dutch for cutting off a head. Sometimes it was of the giving of the Last Sacrament to a converted heathen, a heathen whose conversion did not keep him from praying to his ancestor idol and murmuring the name of one of his abandoned deities, as well as that of the strange new God.

Even Lucas had a story that, if he would have told it, would probably have thrown some light on native life. Once, several years ago, after he had finished supervising the harbour master's work on one of the smaller adals, he did not return to the boat Oddly, his absence was not noticed, and the *Bellatrix* had been several hours under way before he was missed. Instantly the boat was turned about. It is probably the only case of any steamer —to say nothing of a boat on government business bent losing a day in making search for a dog. The adal where Lucas had last been seen was scoured, but he could not be found.

Six months later a Royal Mail packet steamer picked him up on an island far from the adal where he

had deserted his ship, or his ship had deserted him. The latter supposition seems the more probable to one who knows anything of dog psychology The mess boy of the boat had formerly worked on the *Bellatrix*, and he recognised Lucas in the forlorn-looking dog hanging about the beach. Lucas did his share in enthusiastic recognition, too, and he was taken aboard. When, days later, the mail packet came within signalling distance of the *Bellatrix*, a megaphone carried the news of the distinguished passenger aboard. The *Bellatrix's* row boat was lowered, and Lucas was brought back in state to his home ship. How he had made his way from adal to adal is a matter of conjecture. Incredibly long swims there must have been, and rides in prahus as he went searching for his ship. Probably the greatest danger he encountered was of being used for bait for crocodile, in the manner that I saw live dogs used on the island of Nias. A rope was tied to the dog before he was thrown into the water. He was a tempting bit for the waiting crocodile, but the rope served for line to haul the crocodile to shore after the dog had been swallowed. Or Lucas may have had to dodge dog meat markets. Whatever his experiences, they cured him of vagabonding.

There was besides myself one visiting passenger on the *Bellatrix*—the Consul. He, too, must have had stories, but he was almost as inarticulate as Lucas. For forty years he had been a resident of Padang, with never one return to his old home in Vienna. His vacations were always spent in some

such voyage as this, cruising among the islands. He was manifestly happy; manifestly keenly observant, but never have I known a more silent man.

With these companions life on the *Bellatrix* was full of interest. And the beauty of the watery, island-strewn world we were travelling made the cruise a delight. Sometimes we sailed so close to an island that we could see the green of the palm groves, the stretches of white sand, and a naked savage stolidly watching our boat as she ploughed the water. Sunrise and sunset touched these bits of land with vivid colours

But when a lighthouse came into view—a skeleton structure of steel outlined against a palm green background—I came back to the realisation that the cruise was not merely a romantic adventure; there was work to be done by some on board. Anchor would be cast. Next came Lucas' leap into the water, instantly following the first movement of the Malay crew toward the row boat. He would swim ashore, and be ready to meet us when we stepped from the row boat. If landing could not be made, the row boat would take us as close to land as possible; then we swam or waded the rest of the way.

At one small island, natives carrying a chair, waded through the high surf to meet us. The harbour master stepped from the boat, seated him self with as much composure as though being carried in a chair about the Indian Ocean were a matter of everyday occurrence, and was borne to shore, I

could not forgo sharing the experience, and waited my turn at the chair

Next we followed Lucas across the sands to the lighthouse; spick and span always, and with white washed rocks. Sometimes there was a tiny garden to furnish such food for the keeper and his family as was not supplied by the ever-present cocoanut grove. The harbour master and his assistant, the chief engineer, began inspection, and checked equipment, down to the last pencil on the recording desk. Watching him I understood the reason for the name given to him by his associates—Mr Thoroughly. Once, while waiting in the store room of the lighthouse, I observed the metal tanks labelled " Amazon Brand, Union Carbide Company, U S.A " It interested me as being a result of the war. Formerly all the gas was supplied by Germany and Sweden.

The consul and I always returned to ship laden with spoils. Sometimes they were shells, sponges, coral, and bits of stone, and a curious ivory-like substance that grows on some of the vegetation.

Once our burden was bread-fruit. The consul, wise in tropic lore, had instructed me in the right fruit to pick—the Klawi, not the Sokoem, which is inedible. Even the Klawi is scorned by Europeans, but the chef prepared some for me according to island recipes. Part he roasted, and served with sugar palm syrup. The syrup was better than the bread-fruit. Of the rest he prepared Klawi Chen-chang, a stew that was delicious, and which tasted

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somewhat like the heart of an artichoke; somewhat, too, like egg plant.

This cruising through narrow and dangerous straits—straits, by the way, which had been sounded and chartered fifty years ago by a man of my blood, Captain Lucas Holtzapfel, Commander in the Dutch Navy—brought something of a mariner's feeling for lighthouses. They light roads for the night. The ideal application would be to mark with a lighthouse every cape, rock, reef and shoal along the charted way, but because of the prohibitive cost, lighthouses and unattended lights are set only at the most necessary points.

We lingered for a day at Poeloe Tello, which is the largest of the Batoe group, and no great island at that, for it has only five hundred inhabitants—Malay, Chinese and Polynesians from South Nias. The freight ships which formerly carried away only timber and dried fish now add copra to the cargo. Poeloe Tello, tiny as it is, is taking on commercial significance. The Controlleur of the Batoe group met us and took us to his house Almost at once he led me to his greatest pride, an aquarium which he has cut out among the coral reefs.

"Watching a fish fight is my chief diversion," he said. "Learned it from the natives, who are as fond of fish fights as they are of cock and pigeon fights"

A war was indeed under way in the clear pools, gay with tinted sea fans and sea urchins, crabs, green

turtles and coral coloured starfish. The fish, like those of Hawaii, have jewel-like brilliance of colouring. At first sight the darting at each other seemed to be in play, but I soon saw that it was in desperate earnest. The fight of two little fishes was settled by a large one who grabbed one of the small combatants. "Quite after the manner of settling national struggles," I moralised, as I turned away to enjoy the controlleur's next bit of entertainment.

He had put at the service of the consul and myself the only horse on Poeloe Tello the only horse that had ever been on Poeloe Tello. Hitched to an old victoria and driven by a Malay, this unique specimen hauled us about the island, along the shore road, cocoanut-shaded, that follows the line of the Equator. The road came to a sudden end; the impasse was a rock of mountainous proportions. We got out of our conveyance and went to investigate. The rock proved to be the outer shell of Poeloe Tello's grotto. We entered it, of course.

It was dark, and slimy and forbidding As we walked on, reptiles glided across our feet. We were choked by sulphurous gases. Soon the spot of light which marked the entrance was lost, and we stumbled on for what seemed an endless time before our straining eyes discerned another spot, which told us that we were nearing the other entrance. Probably the entire experience did not last more than ten minutes but in such conditions every minute seems an hour.

Outside, in the bright sunlight, we were greeted

by a gruesome sight a high pile of skeletons We had stumbled on the last resting place of Poeloe Tello's dead. White stones and sprays of coral were piled with the human bones and all had been blanched in the fierce sunlight. This manner of disposing of the dead is adat.

Our depression was lifted by the only horse on Poeloe Tello We had no more than seated ourselves in the carriage—our return had been made around, not through, the grotto when the horse made a sudden sidewise lurch, that tumbled us, victoria and all, over the embankment The horse did not join us. His harness had broken, so he stood safely on the bank, gravely staring as we scrambled out from under the carriage and up the embankment.

We returned to the controlleur's house on foot, and laughing. Was this the best in the way of adventure that a savage island had to offer? A fish fight and a spill out of an ancient victoria, by a horse that could not even run after he had dumped his burden?

These are indeed pale times!

CHAPTER XVI

THE DOMAIN OF SAVAGE KINGS

A RIGOROUS inspection was made on Nias. The Dutch still keep a vigilant eye on the natives of that island, and especially on the chiefs, who are still powerful.

Instead of proceeding direct to this largest of the islands we were to visit, we had first returned to the Sumatra coast. The *Bellatrix* had been placed at the disposal of Mr Ypes, the Resident of Tapanoeli, who with his chief of police, born in Volendam, and a native corporal, came aboard at Siboga. Then we set our course back toward Nias. The outlying islands are included in the Tapanoeli Residency; under Mr Ypes' jurisdiction are eight hundred thousand natives of different tribes, languages, religions and adats. I have mentioned before the careful training in primitive psychology that is given the men in the Dutch Colonial service. Never was I more strongly impressed with the need for it than on Nias, the wildest bit of Wilhelmina's realm to come under my observation.

The island, with its seventy-six square miles, seemed like a small continent after our days on adals. Of its one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants

only thirty-five are Europeans. This includes officials, two missionaries with their wives and children, two traders, and the Swiss manager of the only European-owned cocoanut grove on the island. (One cocoanut grove owned by Europeans How many does it foreshadow?)

On so small an area one would not expect to find marked differences of tribe and custom, but these differences exist. A range of toy mountains, not more than two thousand feet high but covered with dense jungle growth divides the island. North of this ridge the people are gentle and shy. In appearance and dress and manner they are not unlike the natives of the west coast of Sumatra. But in the south one finds the Nias that is Polynesian. It is a country of six foot men, whose loin-cloths are made of bark. Martial law there prevails North Nias welcomed the coming of the Dutch. The people were not slow to see that the Colonial Government gave them protection against the piratical neighbours on the south, and against the Atjehs, whose prahus had made frequent visits to the Nias coast, and had gone away laden with slaves.

We landed at Goenoeng Sitoli, the north-east trading centre of the island. Curious that one of the thirty five Europeans and I should remind each other of old acquaintance while we shook hands!

"Rector's, in New York. That's where I met you," the assistant resident said "You're responsible for an attack of ptomaine poisoning I had afterwards. But *what* clams they were that you

fed me! We have two hundred and seventeen varieties of sea food here on Nias, but they don't taste like that."

Tendering his report to the Resident was a matter of a few minutes; then we were all in the saddle, riding into the interior. It was to be a day's ride through sparsely settled country. The small villages were far apart; natives fled at the sight of us, hurrying up ladders into the palm-sheltered houses on stilts. It was not ourselves that they feared, but our horses, animals they rarely see. The carts along the way were drawn by men and children. Repeated efforts to breed horses on the island have been made by the government, but all have been unsuccessful. The few ponies on Nias have been imported; most are owned by officials, though a few chiefs have overcome their timidity, and ride. The officials tell the story of a chief's comment on the first horse he saw.

"Kuda (horse) bad ghost. Too wise. Two tails; one on neck, one behind. Tuan gets on Kuda's back, and Kuda knows where Tuan wants to go."

But the lack of horses and bullocks was made up for by the number of goats, ducks, dogs and pigs that we saw as we rode along. Of pigs there must be an inexhaustible supply. Pig meat and palm wine are essential to the happiness of the natives throughout Nias.

Our horses climbed steadily. After hours in the saddle we came in sight of a kampong on a hill-top,

from which we could look down on the ocean There were probably a dozen houses. Two, built on a knoll apart, were in European style; they were the buildings on the Rhenish mission. Substantial, spacious, and with high ceilings, they made ideal quarters for the fifty native boys, who, taught by two missionaries, were grappling with the intricacies of a new language, new religion, new customs. The boys were divided into two classes. The elder group ranged in age from sixteen to twenty-two years; the others were somewhat younger All wore cotton trousers and jackets. These are the youngsters who will go out as native teachers; much needed, for as yet Nias has none.

There is no other mission on the island. Efforts to establish one in the south have been fruitless, for disease and koppesnellen have interfered with each attempt.

The religion the missionaries are trying to supplant on Nias is animistic, but it is a different animism from that obtaining among the Bataks. There is a suggestion of sun worship in the faith of the Niassers. Their golden ornaments are symbols of the sun. Stones, too, come in for a share of veneration. They are the bones of the earth. Sun and stone, working together, created the gods and humankind. In the Niasser's poetic legend of the beginning a stone fell from the upper world to the earth. The sun's rays beat up the stone and cleft it. From the cleavage there came froth, which changed into a woman. She was the first living creature, the mother of the gods,

and of all humanity. To her were born nine children, all with god-like attributes. Three of her sons have power over life and death, and are therefore mightiest of the deities.

Si Barisi Noso is the keeper of life's unlimited substance, or soul. At death the soul returns to Noso.

Lowalangi determines how much of life's substance each human shall have, but he gives in accordance with the wish expressed by the human before birth.

Ture Luluwo is the weigher of the substance. He carries out Lowalangi's orders

Mightiest of this trinity of gods is Lowalangi. Though never addressed in prayer his name is one to conjure with Prayers are made to images representing good and bad spirits, and the spirits of ancestors Like all idols they are grotesque, and are of carved wood or stone Every kampong has many idols both inside and out of the huts.

In the service of the gods is an order of priests and priestesses. These holy persons may always be recognised on sight, for it is their privilege to carry a parasol—an important symbol in the sun worship, no doubt. The priesthood may be present at all feasts, but certain foods are forbidden them.

There is rejoicing at death; never sorrow, for all is in accordance with the contract made before birth with Lowalangi. The deceased had power to choose length of life, and now the soul is with Noso. And, by easy deduction, murder becomes not a crime, but a favour rendered.

Here was a mental attitude the Dutch officials found hard to control. With so good a justification for koppesnellen, and so many needs for heads, the natives were difficult to convince.

Heads are needed for corner stones of each new kampong, and for the corner-stone of the house of a chief. They play a part in the making of a new crown, and are used to appease the spirits of ancestors. In some parts of the island the number of wives a man may have is determined by the number of heads he has taken. Not that the work of koppesnellen is always done by the man who requires the head. A chief may employ a professional, who closes on the victim from the rear, strikes with a mandau, and finishes the work with a spear.

The heads are brought to the kampong, and the killers given triumphal entry. The brains are removed from the captured head by means of a piece of bamboo inserted through the nose; the hair is cut off to adorn the sword hilt of the slayer; the eyes are covered with leaves, and the head is hung over a slow fire and left to smoke for a month or longer. Eventually it is taken to the Balé—the house of the gods and assembly hall of chiefs. There the head remains as a trophy of bravery until needed in one of its many uses.

All this is perhaps a closed door; a matter of yesterday, but it is of so recent a yesterday that the Dutch officials are likely to use "do" and "did" interchangeably when speaking of koppesnellen, and thus the hearer is left in some perplexity. But this

much one may assume. The head of any one of the thirty-five Europeans on the island is in no danger. It would be missed much too surely and swiftly. The heads of the one hundred and fifty thousand Niassers may not be so safe. These customs, as described to me, seemed impossible to the gentle, shy people who fled into their huts at the sound of our horses' hoofs, but koppesnellen has existed both in the north and south. And in both sections the habit of licking the victim's blood from the knife, as a means of restoring strength to the slayer, has obtained.

After leaving the Rhenish mission, we headed south toward Lahagoe, where we were to pass the night at a government rest-house. Halt was made for lunch, which consisted only of cocoanut milk Refreshed, but for my part far from satisfied, we rode on through country that, with every mile, grew wilder and rougher. Certain incidents of the day stand out, trifling occurrences, but significant of some bit of native life.

There was, for example, the music that I heard as we neared one kampong. The sound was clear and flute-like. Suddenly the music stopped, for the player had caught sight of us. He hurried from the roadside into the palms, but not before I had had a glimpse of his bamboo flute. It is a curious instrument, blown with the nose, not the mouth.

We arrived at a river bank at the moment when a gang of prisoners waded through the water. Each one carried on his head a Standard oil can, and I

was reminded of the declaration of a Dutch wag that without Kettejonges (chain boys) and Petroleum Blikke the colonies could not be developed. As a matter of fact work outdoors is necessary for the men. They would become insane if confined. And the cans which advertise Rockefeller's product round the world make good containers for many of the loads the prisoners carry. Both size and shape recommend them for the purpose

Among the prisoners I was startled to see Djok, carrying the Victrola which he had come to believe was his especial charge wherever he might go What, I wondered, had the beguiling beggar done to get into trouble with the authorities in the short time since I had seen him Justice in the islands must be swift indeed I was relieved to learn that his presence was merely a matter of orders. The servants had been told to join us at Lahagoe with the luggage, and they had taken a short cut across the mountains.

Music welcomed us into the kampong across the river. And it was the music of a brass band Though the missionaries who had taught the natives to play these unfamiliar instruments had gone elsewhere, their work had not been lost.

The sight of Lahagoe was welcome, for we had ridden all day. Until recently the Dutch have maintained a garrison at this point, and since the country is fever infested, a swimming pool had been dug and cemented for the use of the officials and soldiers. There we all spent an hour before dinner

—all, that is, except the Resident, who immediately upon arrival entered into conference with the waiting chiefs. At sunrise I was again at the pool, splashing about in the palm shaded water, and listening to the song of the Beo Bird—a curious singing parrot that is found nowhere except on Nias and Mentawei.

Back of Lahagoe lies the country that has never been penetrated by the Dutch. Rivers, gullies, swamps and dense forests make travel too difficult for any but the South Niassers, who occasionally make raids by this route on their gentle northern neighbours. We were to return to Goenoeng Sitoli the way we had come, and there take boat for Telok Delam We started early, when life was just beginning to stir, and therefore glimpsed much that we had missed the day before. Brown bears lumbered out of sight in the bushes at the sound of our horses' hoofs; deer fled before us; monkeys, naughty and daring as street urchins, chattered and grinned at us from the trees Snakes and vampire bats and porcupines were to be seen. There was a good chance to pick off a bear or deer, but no hunting is allowed when the Resident is on inspection. The natives have no fire-arms, nor ammunition. The importation is prohibited, as is that of opium and alcohol This last is, however, no great deprivation so long as the palm wine holds out. Medicinal qualities are ascribed to the sap of the palm, and the sick suck it through thin bamboo It was served to us in cocoanut shells, and in banana leaves rolled into a cone.

During the night we steamed slowly down the east coast of Nias and cast anchor off Telok Delam, at the southern point. This little port was to be headquarters of inspection in South Nias—"Wild South Nias," in the phrase of my official friends. And when Major Van der Horst, the military and civil governor came aboard the *Bellatrix* to welcome us I got an idea of how wild South Nias might be, or might have been in a past so recent that it is not yet forgotten. Revolvers hung from his cartridge laden belt. He looked like a walking arsenal.

Like my companions on the *Bellatrix*, the major is a veteran of the colonial service. Forces under his command took the last stronghold of the most savage tribe on Celebes; for this and other gallant work he won the highest decoration in the gift of his queen. He was instrumental in keeping the peace he had made. Without his work the Baldwin Locomotive Company would not now be making engines for the railway under construction in that part of Celebes.

Telok Delam was decorated in honour of our coming, excitement was high. We eight formed the largest group of white men that had landed on Nias since actual warfare ceased about ten years ago. From every shack in the trading section fluttered a Dutch flag. The Chinese merchants had also hung the flag of their Republic. Strange colours to be flying over the people who thronged the streets of the little southern port—the most picturesque of all Wilhelmina's subjects. For the first time I saw Polynesian savagery in all its physical beauty.

Almost naked beauty it was. Most of the men who sauntered through the streets wore only a loin cloth made of bark A few Sulus (chiefs) wore a bark vest also, sleeveless, and which left their chests bare. Some carried knives and spears. Women were out in numbers too. Though more adequately clad than the men their beautiful brown bodies were by no means hidden by the yard of blue cloth which was wound round the hips and tucked in at the waist in the back.

There was no shyness here, and much curiosity Telok Delam was frankly out to see the white people who had come on the government steamer, and who now walked down the main street. Our little procession was headed by the Major and the Resident. I, following with the assistant resident and brushing close to the knife carrying natives, asked a few questions.

"What about all this cutlery? Is that the reason the Major goes so heavily armed?"

The assistant resident laughed. "Not at all. This is just a survival of centuries of warfare between the tribes. Before we took hold in 1905 there was always danger of attack, and they had to be ready. The men went armed when they escorted their women to the fields and stood guard over them while they worked It wasn't rebellion on the part of the women that they feared, but the swooping down of another tribe that would carry the women away. Six months after we came self-disarmament had begun, but the men still stick to the habit of carrying mandaus. As

a matter of fact the knives mean no more than does your walking stick. Of course, this section is still under martial law." All the ammunition in the town is under the control of the Major and his garrison of one hundred and fifteen Malay soldiers, officered by a Dutch medical officer, a lieutenant, and six Dutch non commissioned officers The barracks are within a stone's throw of the beach, a setting which reminded me of the United States garrison at Jolo, in the Sulu Archipelago.

There are many shops in Telok Delam. The Niassar must go to them to get his fish hooks and his calico, his kerosene, flour and axes, for it is not considered wise to permit public Pasars, nor give occasion for a gathering of the natives The knives, I take it, cannot be too surely counted on to remain mere walking sticks. Past the long row of shops we came on a few native huts, all substantially built, set high on pillars, and with thatched roofs of a steep pitch. It was a type of architecture more strong and beautiful than I had found elsewhere in the islands I was to see it in every kampong I visited, and it came to mean South Nias to me.

We were headed for the Major's residence. There we found half a dozen chiefs from the outlying districts, come to do honour to the great Dutch chief from Tapanoeli. They stood in a semi-circle in front of the house—splendid men, all. Every one of them was more than six feet tall. Each wore a gold ring about his forehead, gold bracelets, and gold spikes in the moustache. Resplendent as they were

and dazzling, I found myself clear-headed enough to consider the cost of all that wrought gold. Probably it had been acquired in the first place by piracy and slave trading, but that had been only the beginning. For the making it into the desired article is a long process requiring many workers, and the workers must be fed The inauguration of a crown means another feast, for so good an occasion for a pig and palm wine banquet would not be lost. Every opportunity for a feast is seized. As I looked over these visiting chiefs, in conference now with the Resident, I wondered whether one of them was he of whom I had lately heard, who had bought a captured slave for sixty guilders, koppesnelled him after three days, buried the head, and in four months dug it up as an occasion for a feast.

I remembered, too, the story of King Siwahumonga —The Nine Times More To Be Feared Than Any One Else, who with King Bawasaro—The One With The Mouth That Means What He Says, went from Hililando in 1902 to visit some kings near Lahoesa At the end of the banquet, which was given in honour of their coming, the self-invited guests bade their followers beat the drums to drown the cries, while they set about killing their hosts and bearing away the heads. The native police interrupted the orgy given in celebration when Siwahumonga reached home. Though the murderers escaped they were eventually captured and received, I believe, the fifteen year sentence that is usual for koppesnellen. Siwahumonga was later converted to Christianity.

I fitted this story to one of our visiting kings; he wore a coral ring about his neck, emblem of bravery, and of many captured heads. Vision-of-Gold, Smile of-the Ghosts, and One-Beloved-by Cats were pointed out to me by the Major.

There followed days of inspection in which the motor launch of the *Bellatrix*, her row boats, the medical officers' Ford, and several ponies were all called into service. The various inlets along the south-eastern end of the island were travelled, the banks of the rivers emptying into the ocean were examined, the condition of the roads was looked into, and we visited several kampongs in the interior.

It was in these kampongs that I had a glimpse of the life of the people. I saw them at their work—building boats, baking pottery, knitting fish-nets, working with rattan. I saw them peeling the bark off a tree and beating it with a wooden hammer, by which simple process is produced the bark fabric for their loin cloths and jackets. I saw also the results of their astonishing ability in stone cutting and statuary sculpture, of metal working and weaving, and of their painting, for which they get the dyes from leaves and bark The Niassars have a primitive wisdom in supplying their needs. For example, they obtain salt by boiling sea water.

Once, in driving through a wooded section, I saw a native dodge out from behind a tree; he carried a long spear. Then, from behind another tree, came another spear-carrying native. It looked like a private war, but proved to be only a wild boar hunt.

Pits had been dug from one to three yards deep, and dogs, trained for hunting, were busy chasing the boars toward the holes. Once in, the Niassar speared the creature in much the same manner that I was told they used preliminary to koppesnellen. Another boar hunting device is a spring lance which works like a trap. Still another is the fencing of a part of the wood with wire netting, and driving the animals against it. Manifestly it is boars, not sport, that the Niassars wish.

These glimpses of native life, fleeting though they were, and some of the experiences that came to me in the kampongs set me on the trail of learning all that I could of the adats of the country.

The Martyr Tree was pointed out to me It was a giant, standing not far from the Major's house, at the cross roads where all must pass on the way either to the beach or the shops in Telok Delam. The tree had been given its name by the Dutch because, before their coming, criminals were chained to it. Every passer by was required to cut with his spear or mandau a piece out of the body of the accused man, under penalty of being tied next to the victim if he did not fulfil the adat.

The crime so punished was always theft. Among primitive peoples property is the only thing protected. As civilisation progresses life and liberty come in for a share of the law's attention. Sins against the spirits of ancestors were also punished, sometimes by being forbidden to touch a stone, to eat fish or anything of round shape, or to

look to the right or left Atonement could sometimes be made by paying ten guilders, or a pig to the chief. The threat is made that if the offender does not make the atonement required his joints will swell, or his rice will be eaten by mice, or he will become insane. A rigid sex code prevails. Sniffing or sneezing behind a woman is, for some inexplicable reason, punished by a beating If a boy and girl attempt to dispense with the marriage ceremony they are bound together, and in the presence of the female members of the tribe, are thrown from a coral reef into the ocean to be devoured by sharks. Certain other sex offences are punished by strangling, hanging, spearing in a pit, chopping piecemeal, or drowning

Once while I waited outside a hut, I heard screams The voice was unmistakably a man's, and I wondered if murder were being done. My companion the Assistant Resident, I believe—reassured me.

"It isn't death; it's birth," he said. And when I protested that it was a man's scream, not a woman's that I heard, he nodded. "That's one of the adats. When a child is to be born, the father goes to bed; writhes and shrieks as though he were undergoing labour pains. It is the way he acknowledges the legitimacy of the child."

Curious superstitions prevail with regard to the birth of a child Before its arrival both parents must exercise great care in their acts lest the baby pay a penalty. To kill a pig will give a child boils.

To kill a snake will give it colic. Walking past a tomb will bring convulsions on the child, and eating a bird will give it a voice like a bird It is still more perilous to speak with a stranger or to take an oath, for the first results in the child being born dumb, the second in its being stillborn

The Niassers are tender with their children, and it is only under the compulsion of these superstitions that cruelty or child murder is done. A missionary gave me the instance of a young couple to whom twins were born Now twins, it seems, must not be, so these were put in a bag with a bit of sago and sugar cane, and were tied in a tree near to the parents' hut. The young couple stood by and listened to the babies' crying until it stopped. The next year twins were again born to them. This time, by order of a priestess, the husband had not only to kill the twins, but to bring a head to the kampong. Thus only could he pacify the spirits, and avert disaster to the entire village. Boys are more desired than girls, and sometimes the unwelcome girl baby is named "Logoena," meaning "useless." But it is the girls who do the work As soon as she is able to shoulder the carrying basket the child goes with her mother to the field to work, and to bring in cocoanuts, bananas, sugar-cane and tapioca —food for her father and brothers; food, too, for the pigs. At fifteen she is marriage-able, and in this connection, another of the adats was dramatically brought to my attention.

In a street of one of the kampongs in the interior

I saw as melancholy a party as it has ever been my bad luck to happen upon. A young girl walked slowly past our conveyance, wailing at the top of her voice. Half a dozen older women, also weeping, were at her heels.

"Just a wedding party," I was told. "There's nothing you can do about it."

I learned that this was a necessary part of marriage adat, and that the preliminaries of a wedding extend over several weeks. It all begins with a present of pig meat sent by the father of the bridegroom to the father of the bride, the groom is the messenger. Later he goes again to his future father-in law's kampong, this time with enough pigs to feed all the inhabitants of the village. There is a feast in which the bride plays a leading part A piece of cloth is looped about her neck, and fastened to the idols which represent her ancestors Pig bristles are offered to these idols by the priest or chief, who also prays for blessings on the bride (That humans are the pigs of the gods is one of the beliefs. It gives a special significance to the use of pig meat and bristles in their religious ceremonies)

After all this feasting and praying a period of mourning begins for the bride For days she weeps at home. Then, accompanied by her mother and a few other women she goes through the streets of the kampong, and into the houses, weeping and chanting a special mourning song. The burden of it is this.

"Oh, mother, now you will bury me,
You love the gold more than you love me.
How foolish that you do not keep me for a slave!
In vain you brought me up You are satisfied with
the gold that you receive for me, oh, mother,
But what will you do when you are ill?
Who will then care for your body. . . "

The song is a triumph of self-pity, and it is more than likely that the little bride, looking about her, puts a good deal of heart into her mourning. She receives a gift at each house gold or silver, cloth or pig meat.

Another essential of the ceremony is that the mother of the groom gives to the bride a new and beautiful name: String of Gold, Bud of Silver, or something equally fanciful. The ceremony is concluded by the bride and groom, in festive garments, standing in front of their ancestor images, while the chief or priest knocks their heads together. When she is lifted into the house of the groom, a baby boy is waved before the bride, and the chief prays that she may be blessed with many sons.

The experiences in South Nias were topped by a visit to two kings whose realms lay on the mountain flats back of Telok Delam King Si Dofa, in the kampong Hilidjihoeno, seven hundred feet above the sea, and King Wakil, the Nine Flamed One, whose village, Bawamataloewo, lies at an altitude of eleven hundred feet.

It is a part of these incredible times that we set out in an automobile—the Resident, the Major and

I. Police scouts and soldiers had been sent ahead. A twelve mile drive brought us to the foot of the hills; there we waited for the others, who had followed in a buggy. Then, single file, we climbed the stairs that led to the first kampong. The steps were made in various ways, some chopped into the rocks; some dug in the ground and paved with pebbles. At the entrance of the kampong soldiers stood on guard. They wore bark loin cloths, and carried huge shields and spears. Huts the typical hut of South Nias—lined the two sides of a paved space. A few natives stood about, eyeing us curiously. The Resident led the way to the most pretentious of the houses—the home of King Si Dofa.

But there was no king to welcome us. The Resident and Major had much conversation with the people who stood about, and straightway runners were started to fetch the king. He was probably at the boar hunt we had seen as we rode through the woods. But, wherever he had been, he was soon with us. Obviously the stairs were not the hardship to him that they had been to me. He did not look to be a king; the battered black, campaign hat somehow took away the splendour from the broad gold band that was jammed over it. He wore, also, a bark jock strop and vest.

Instantly he and the Dutch advisers entered into conference The talk lasted more than an hour, and must have been important for it is by such means that the officials keep their close contact with native

life and affairs. Business over, we did not linger, for Bawamataloewo was yet to be visited. Following us, King Si Dofa joined the party.

Back of the lower kampong, we passed through a dark jungle. I stepped on a giant snake, a sawa, and my companions laughed at my fright. A snake of uniform colour is never venomous, they asserted, but I had no desire to test the matter The footpath brought us to another stairway, a slippery mountain ladder of rock, stones and protruding roots. There were in all one thousand steps of uneven spacing; some were just wide enough to trip over; some were three feet apart. It is a way of building stairs calculated to disconcert an approaching enemy, but I cannot recommend it for any other purpose. It is equally disconcerting to friends. The top gave us a view of the forest, and of the sea beyond.

The kampong was walled. Soldiers with spears and shields guarded the entrance—they were a few of the seven hundred and fifty warriors who make up King Wakil's fighting force. Spears and mandaus! There is sinister suggestion in unfamiliar arms.

The consul and I arrived somewhat later than the others—we had had no practice on those stairs of a thousand steps. Together we passed between the lines of silent guards, and into the kampong. Houses in rows a quarter of a mile long were on the two sides of a broad space, paved with stone slabs and cobbles, down the centre ran a six-foot path I

BRAVES OF BAWAMATALOLWO, SOUTH NIAS SUMATRA

stood and looked long, that I might fix in memory the details of the amazing picture Houses, supported by pillars . . . huge boulders . . . long stone benches . . stone statuary, grotesquely carved . . . idols . . . everything grey and weather worn . . . natives standing midway of the paved space, themselves statue-like. It was all lifeless, a thing of some remote yesterday. I was reminded of Pompeii, and of the Sacred Way in Rome.

But the statue-like natives began to move about, and brought realisation that the village was very much alive. There was something amusing in the discovery that each house bore a number, exactly as if it had stood in Amsterdam. In front of No. 55 we came on the Resident and the Major resting and drinking cocoanuts with the nephew of King Wakil. A man of middle age, he seemed, and gave no more suggestion of savage royalty than did King Si Dofa. Less, indeed, for he wore cotton trousers and jacket. The consul and I joined the others of our party on the long stone bench, for it was long enough to hold the eight of us, and three feet high. Formerly it had served in ceremonies connected with human sacrifice.

When our cocoanuts had been drunk, we were invited to enter the house of King Wakil. But I was not willing to go in until I had examined some of the wonders outside. My friends were kept busy answering my questions, sometimes out of their own knowledge, sometimes by passing my question

on to the king's nephew, and translating his answer to me.

The massive under structure of the house, beams five feet in diameter, had been brought from the forests on Poelo Tello, so were the heavy wooden slabs, which looked like polished mahogany Prahus had brought them to Nias; rattan cables had pulled them up the mountain stairway. The boulders had been pulled up in the same manner; brought to serve as last resting place for a chief. Royalty has a tomb; only the poor and slave dead are left above ground, or exposed in trees.

This mausoleum of King Wakil had been pulled up the mountain stairway in 1914. It took five hundred and twenty-five men two days to do the work of hauling and setting it up on the spot indicated by the priests and priestesses. The workers consumed fourteen pigs and mountains of rice on the trip. The tomb is ten and a half feet long, six feet wide and twelve feet long, to give space not only for King Wakil, but also for many heads, every one of which means a slave taken into soul land In the old days a dying chief might specify the number of slaves he would take with him

The under structure of the house is high, and large enough to give hiding place to a couple of hundred soldiers. I saw racks for spears. On the floor above, reached by a ladder, we came into a large hall, a sort of throne room which must have been used for ceremonials and banquets and other festivities. The floor yet above seemed to be used

chiefly for a look out. Everywhere were hiding-places; everywhere, too, drums hundreds of them gongs, ancestor idols. Near the idols were wooden boxes supposed to contain heads I noticed a row of lower jaw bones, and was told that they were preserved because the soul of a man clings to that especial bone

Boar skulls and tusks in incredible numbers, birds, antlers, horns and lamps of baked clay were arranged on the walls and rafters. These were easily accounted for, and I knew that the boar trophies indicated abundance, but where had the old Chinese porcelain come from? There were quantities of it displayed with the relics of the hunt. There were wooden tabourettes and a sideboard, carved in animal and flower designs, and showing a remarkable art.

I turned from these examples of an ancient, unaccounted for culture to the personal belongings of King Wakil. There were half a dozen heavy crowns, with flower ornaments a yard high—musical comedy crowns to the last detail, except that they were really of gold instead of gilt. Gold wire points for the moustache lay beside them. Wakil, in gala attire, must have been a monarch worth going far to see.

A frying pan and a mortar for stamping rice made me realise that work went on in the house. There were a few wooden plates, too; rather a luxury, for palm and banana leaves are commonly used. There were no special sleeping quarters. The Kapok

sleeping mat is moved each night. We saw no women It is adat that the wives of a king may not be seen

Wakil's is not the only palace in Bawamataloewo Down and across the street, we came to No. 68, the home of King Tochenori, younger and of less power than King Wakil. His pride was a piece of Dutch cannon, captured years ago by his tribe, and now placed in front of his house Nearby was a thirty-foot prahu, cut out of stone, and beautifully carved It was a bit of workmanship that would have held my attention long, if my imagination had not been captured by an enormous chair, cut out of solid rock—King Wakil's throne when officiating at ceremonies. Stones formerly used for human sacrifice, and torture contrivances were close by. It was a scene to give wings to dark fancy. The Dutch have indeed brought changes.

By this time the paved space was thronged with people. Perhaps the Major had had something to do with that. The children were friendly; the grown ups eyed us curiously, and from a distance. "But they are progressing," the Major told me. "Some of the women have had the perforations in their earlaps sewn up recently by the medical officer in Telok Delam. There is a sign of the times."

"And here is the 'jumping stone,' that you will find in many kampongs," he said, and indicated a seven-foot stack of bricks, with a stepping-stone in front "The young fellows exercise here every

day. Watch them." He made a sign to the soldiers. Spears and shields were thrown in a heap, and in an instant one brown body after another had leaped over the pile. Faster and faster they went. The air was full of flying legs and arms.

"Ah Chah, Baik, Ah Chah." I heard myself shouting. It was a beautiful spectacle, and I could have watched it for hours. When it ended, the young soldiers having had enough even though I had not, I looked about, and discovered that my party had gone. So had almost everyone else, and beside me was King Si Dofa from the lower kompong.

I opened and offered my cigarette case. It contained only three cigarettes. He took them all. Three and nine, I learned, are sacred numbers. I badly wanted a smoke myself but it seemed better not to mention it. More than anything I wanted to join my vanished party. I started toward the gate, making my way between the soldiers with a show of calm and poise that I was far from feeling. The stairs, when I reached them, looked most inviting, though interminable. On the first step I felt my right arm grabbed. I looked. There was King Si Dofa, smoking one of my cigarettes and grinning. My other arm was grabbed by somebody else. I did not know who it was, but, whoever, he was a man of muscular force.

They picked me up and carried me. I might have felt elated thus to be borne down the stairs of a thousand steps by a king and his unknown helper, while I gazed over the Indian Ocean, but at the

time it did not occur to me. I thought of the Major's cartridge-laden, revolver-hung belt. I remembered the past and present tense with which koppesnellen is mentioned, and I remembered that one of the thirty-five European heads would surely be missed. I was of a divided mind

Down the stairs they carried me, over the jungle path, into the kampong, and deposited me in front of the Balé. I sat on a bench-like table made of stone. Men, women, and children gathered about and stared in a silence that was uncanny. Soon the king took things in hand and sent away all the women except the priestesses—I knew them by their parasols. But even they were sent into the Balé, and instantly there began a beating of drums and a clanging of gongs—the old method, I knew, of drowning a victim's cries.

Si Dofa and four of his followers—all brave men, judging by the coral rings around their necks—came and sat beside me on the bench. Si Dofa offered his betel-nut outfit. I knew this to be a friendly act—possibly the whole party was merely a hospitable return for my three cigarettes. The thought cheered me, and I became calm enough to note the details of the Balé—a pavilion-like building resting on heavy logs, and with a wooden column at each of the corners. It was such a Balé as may be seen in most South Nias kampongs; the highly polished floors are usually trod by priests and priestesses in their religious ceremonials. On the rare occasions when councils of Siulus are held,

the mightiest of the chiefs sit on the stones which are in the four corners.

Through the framework of the Balé I saw dozens of smoked heads, dangling under the idols. I glimpsed a skull through the lower opening in a tomb. The king must have observed my interest in these things, for he summoned three priestesses, gave an order, and at once the women began a slow, curious dance. It must, I think, have been a part of some ceremonial, probably interpretative of death.

I sat back and chewed my betel—betel accepted out of diplomacy, not desire and considered how much more thoroughly I would have enjoyed this adventure had my companions been with me. But if they had been there this would not have been an adventure.

A pig sauntered by, interrupting the dance. Si Dofa pointed to the animal with invitation in his eye. I nodded, and placed my hand on my stomach. Even without one word of a common language, the king and I were arriving at an excellent understanding. There was an appearance of general rejoicing; everyone must have been as hungry as I. Not that pig, but another already cooking furnished our feast at King Si Dofa's palace. Iron pots and kettles and pans were steaming on stones in front of the house; and out of them came sago cakes and pork with a gravy of pigs' blood, boiling hot These delicacies, with shaved cocoanut were put on a banana leaf, and offered to me. Devoutly

I hoped that the pig had not died from natura causes, which is the way the Niassars prefer to have them. For my second helping I took chicken, with yams and sugar-cane syrup. It was, taken all in all, the most remarkable dinner to which I ever sat down.

In the warm mood which follows dinner I had just presented my canvas belt to the king—he obviously coveted it and he in return was tendering me much palm wine, when the party was interrupted. A Dutch officer appeared among us. Behind him were two soldiers, and a non-commissioned officer. My adventure was over. I had not been missed, it was explained, until my companions had reached Telok Delam, for each of the groups had supposed I was with the other

King Si Dofa, nor anyone else, offered to carry me down the next flight of steps With the Dutch officers ahead and the soldiers behind me, I stumbled down the stairs as best I could in the gathering darkness, and soon was whirling in the medical officer's Ford towards Telok Delam.

It was good to see the *Bellatrix* lying in the harbour. The little government boat was brilliantly illuminated, and search lights played from it. Not necessary, all this lighting Just a custom left from former days, like the natives' habit of carrying knives and spears and shields.

A short sail away from Nias the *Bellatrix* poked her nose through a coral gateway, and we found

ourselves among the islets and adals that make up the Hinako group the last we were to visit.

Gardens of Eden are these tiny islands—spice-fragrant, enchanting. Glow worms shine in the orchid-laden trees. Fish of jewel like brilliancy and colour play in the crystal-clear water, that laps the white beaches Cocoanut groves reach almost to the sea. Nowhere in the world is there more beauty, more abundance.

While the harbour-master and the engineer were at work installing new machinery I climbed to the top of the lighthouse to get the panorama of ocean and green bits of bountiful land. This, I felt, was my moment of farewell. The return to Padang, there to take ship for Marseilles was an old course; this was the end of the new.

The haphazard journey was at an end. Observations and impressions had crowded fast during the months that I had journeyed about the East—seeing, hearing, experiencing wherever and whatever I might. Savage, near-savage, and civilised man—each had added to my knowledge and my understanding In the light of that realisation the place where I stood for my farewell look became to me a symbol. A tower to light the way for the ships of the world. The ships of the East, going west The ships of the West, eastward bound. And the crossings must result in progress to both hemispheres Progress, and a world understanding.

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